

Administrators' Community Update - February 2021



South Gippsland
Shire Council



Background

The Minister for Local Government tasked Administrators with the responsibility to implement the recommendations from the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South Gippsland Shire Council 2019*.

The recommendations are that Council:

- a. Develops and delivers an extensive community leadership development program that:
 - i. Encourages widespread participation in community and civic life in the municipality;
 - ii. Supports the development of community leadership skills; and
 - iii. Supports an improvement in the relationship between the Council and its community.
- b. Reviews and implements improved Council policies and processes, with a focus on Councillor induction and training, the Councillor Code of Conduct and meeting procedures.

This report is an update on the progress being made on these recommendations.

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*South Gippsland
Shire Council*



Message from the Chair Administrator

In many ways our terms as Administrators can be seen in several quite distinct phases. When we first arrived the organisation was on a crisis footing: its Council had been removed by an Act of Parliament and it was clear to us that a great deal of work would need to be done to repair the damage done throughout 2018/19. This applied to Council's relationship with its community too.

That time felt very different to how the last six or nine months has felt. We have built relationships both inside the organisation and within the community. We have moved past healing and into delivering on the tasks set for us. Despite COVID-19 and all the implications for the organisation that it brought, it feels as though 2020 has been a significant year in terms of what we've been able to achieve.

Christian, Rick and I are very confident that the final phase of our Administration – from now through until new Councillors are elected in October 2021 – will be marked by the sort of momentum we're already sensing. There's a genuine dedication within the organisation to have the groundwork laid for the new Councillors. There's also a growing confidence in the community that Council is back on track after the issues that marred the group that was elected in 2016. When that confidence develops into partnerships with the community – which we're already seeing on projects such as the Mirboo North pool, Bair Street, the Great Southern Rail Trail, Foster Indoor Stadium Redevelopment and the suite of projects to revitalise Korumburra – then we're really going to see South Gippsland fulfilling its potential.

It is that sort of environment in which we're hoping candidates for Council will nominate: potential Councillors who want to work with each other and the community they represent to achieve amazing things. From our perspective if active and engaged community members see the opportunity to be a Councillor as an exciting prospect, a chance to serve selflessly in the interests of the greater good, then we will have achieved a large part of what was expected of us. The other part relates to the work we're doing behind the scenes, tidying up policies and procedures under the new *Local Government Act 2020*, and implementing an Administrator Self-Assessment process, to make sure that there cannot be a repeat of the errant behaviour that occurred prior to our appointment.

Over the past few months we have been stewards of Council's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Operationally that work has been managed ably by our Chief Executive Officer, Kerryn Ellis. In terms of strategy and financial allocations, Council has incrementally been allocating its \$2 million Community Support Package where it could best address community needs.

Among a range of initiatives detailed in this report we have:

- Extended annual maintenance grants provided to Council recreation reserve committees;
- Developed a Shop Local advertising campaign for South Gippsland to assist local businesses;
- Waived Business Registration fees and Permits for 2020 and 2021 for 710 local businesses;
- Provided grants to Community Groups, street-front businesses, tourism businesses and home-based businesses; and
- Offset lost income for 22 Recreation Reserves.

There is still half a million dollars left in the Community Support fund that will be allocated as is required over the next six months.

Council welcomed the 20 successful applicants to the Community Leadership Program at a virtual launch on 28 October 2020. Since then the group has participated in a teamwork workshop, a session on “Getting to Know South Gippsland”, had a Q&A session with Kerryn Ellis and also explored the values of leadership with an external facilitator. The third session held in December 2020, explored emotional intelligence in leadership and how to best work and communicate with others.

The second part of this project includes the Youth Leadership Program which will have an uptake of 70 participants. Due to COVID-19, the Program has not commenced and is on track to commence in 2021.


Of all of the achievements throughout our time here, I think that the goodwill and enthusiasm of the Community Leadership Program participants is the thing of which I am most proud. Their genuine desire to learn and to work together to make South Gippsland the best it can be is very inspiring.

I would like to commend the resilience and resourcefulness of our staff throughout 2020. That not one day of operation was lost to the pandemic is a credit to everyone who works for Council. Despite enormous upheaval every phone call was answered, every service request logged. All our staff have worked through the rolling changes – whether that was from home or with COVID-safe practices out in the field. Our gardens have looked spectacular, our roads have been well maintained, our immunisation team has worked diligently to keep the community inoculated, our local laws team has kept cows off roads and returned pets to their owners. That’s just a fraction of the work that has gone on in 2020, but it gives an indication of the diligence of the team we work with here in South Gippsland.

Finally, I would like to commend all the people of South Gippsland for how they have managed this year. Every single person has contributed in their own way to making this year the best it could be, despite the trying circumstances. I would like to make particular note of the efforts of parents, frontline health workers, volunteers and local business people and associations. The inherent qualities of the South Gippsland communities really came to the fore in 2020.



Julie Eisenbise



Response to Objectives

Response to Objective One

That Council develops and delivers an extensive community leadership development program that:

- i. Encourages widespread participation in community and civic life in the municipality;*
- ii. Supports the development of community leadership skills; and*
- iii. Supports an improvement in the relationship between the Council and its community.*

From the time of their appointment Administrators have aimed to build strong networks with regional stakeholders as key to improving community leadership and improving relationships between Council and its community. To that end they have met with local businesses and business associations, community groups and one-on-one with community members, from the beginning of their term. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, one-on-one or group interaction has been limited from March 2020 the Administrators however, have continued to support community members via phone calls or virtual online meetings.

Administrators have met with many key stakeholders and participated in meetings and webinars throughout their term, including:

- One Gippsland (formerly Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN))
- Federal and State Politicians
- Parks Victoria
- MAV Regional and State
- Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Regional Development Victoria
- Destination Gippsland
- Rail Freight Alliance
- South Gippsland Health Service
- Start-up Gippsland
- Volunteer Impact Webinars

Council's Community Asset Committees which replaced the former Section 86 Committees of Council have continued their great work ensuring community assets are managed, developed and maintained for the community. As per the new terms of references for each Committee that were adopted by Council at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting, Committees continue to meet and provide vital information to Council on asset use and needs.

Community Leadership Program

Council commenced the Community Leadership Program with 20 participants selected in the first intake of the Program at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting. Since the intake, two participants have exited the Program. The Program aims to equip participants with a set of skills that will enable them to strengthen their leadership skills, work effectively with people, improve their management skills of dealing with conflict, delegation and meeting individual and group objectives. It is the intention of this Program that the participants will use the expertise and skills learnt, to positively influence and support the development of local communities in South Gippsland.

The Program launched on the 28 October 2020 as a virtual online event due to the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions. Since the launch there has been the following sessions conducted:

- A workshop on teamwork;
- A session on 'Getting to Know South Gippsland' presented by Council's Chief Executive Officer;
- A session on exploring values of leadership provided by an expert external facilitator;
- A session on emotional intelligence in leadership and how best to work and communicate with other people; and
- A session on 'Going Public' aimed at developing public speaking and presentation skills.

Program participants have been getting to know each other and have enjoyed growing their networks. All participants show a keen interest in learning more about South Gippsland, Local Government processes and how to collaborate with other leaders in the region to achieve their future goals and relationships.

Supporting the Community through Funding Streams

Council sees that building community leadership is best achieved by supporting communities to support themselves. With that in mind South Gippsland Shire 2020/21 Community Grants Program aims to support community initiatives that enhance the quality of life, heritage, recreation and cultural opportunities for the wider South Gippsland community. This Program has three different streams that include Community, Small and Emergency Grants with a total budget allocation of \$308,000 for the 2020/21 financial year.

The total grant funding for the first round of this Program, allocated by Council was over \$130,000 for a range of projects within the Shire, assisting 21 community groups. This funding is assisting and supporting community projects with a value of over \$464,000. The funding will help to improve or develop local community assets, assist in promotional activities for events within the Shire, build community capacity, strengthen community sport and recreation reserve facilities and create community culture in local townships.

The submitted applications are assessed by an assessment panel who score the applications using Council's adopted community grants guidelines. The panel also includes two independent community representatives.

\$2M COVID-19 Relief Community Support Package

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council adopted a \$2M COVID-19 Community Support Package Program as part of the 2020/21 Annual Budget. This Program aims to assist local business, community groups and not-for-profit organisations within the Shire.

As part of this Program, Council has assisted the community by:

- Providing over 820 vaccinations, free of charge, over 17 sessions for Council's Flu Vaccine Program in 2020;
- Rental relief waived for six-months for Council owned properties - value of \$50,000
- Extended Rental Relief and Waiver Annual Caravan Park Permit Fees until December 2020 - value of \$77,971;
- Extended annual maintenance grants provided to Council recreation reserve committees - value of \$126,000;
- Shop Local advertising campaign for South Gippsland to assist local businesses within Shire - value of \$40,000;
- Waiver of Business Registration fees and Permits for 2020 and 2021 years - 710 local businesses received \$192,472 in waived fees;
- Community Group/Support Grants Programs - 58 community groups or service providers approved with a total funding amount of \$107,772;
- Quick Response Business Grants Program - 83 businesses approved with a total funding amount of \$83,000;
- Tourism Business Grants Program - 53 businesses approved with a total funding amount of \$53,000;
- Home Based Business Grants Program - 22 businesses approved with a total funding amount of \$22,000; and
- Recreation Reserve Income Offset - 22 Recreation Reserves received additional grant funding - value of \$126,000.

As at December 2020, a total cost of approved initiatives for funding as part of this Program is \$1.5M, leaving a balance of \$504,390 for further allocation funding within the Shire in 2021.



Community Networking and Engagement

Council is also considering a suite of policies that relate to community networking and engagement participation. The review of Council's draft *Community Engagement Policy* was conducted from mid-November to early December 2020 via an online survey. It provided an opportunity for community members to advise Council of how they wish to be engaged with in the future planning of Council. This policy revision aligns to the engagement principles outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

During the consultation review process, 61 respondents completed the online survey and fifteen ideas were submitted via the online forum. The survey questions focused on identifying how community members wish to be engaged with in the future. The respondents indicated that the most important decisions to engage on were infrastructure services, Strategic Plans, Council policies, Local Laws and other matters such as environment, community projects and opportunities. This Policy is on schedule to be presented at the February 2021 Council Meeting for endorsement.

In addition to this Policy, the *Community Engagement Strategy* is well underway in line with this process and is also on schedule to be presented to the March 2021 Council Meeting. These documents will assist the organisation in networking, consultation and engagement activities with the community.



Response to Objective Two

That Council reviews and implements improved Council policies and processes, with a focus on Councillor induction and training, the Councillor Code of Conduct and meeting procedures.

Council has conducted an extensive review of governance and corporate reporting to ensure Council meets the legislated timelines of the *Local Government Act 2020* (2020 Act) and address the objectives required by the Minister for Local Government. As part of Phase 1, a number of requirements were due for implementation by 1 September 2020. These included:

- A review of Council's *Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy* and *Election Period Policy*
- Creation and implementation of Council's *Governance Rules*
- Creation of a new *Public Transparency Policy*
- A review of Council's Audit and Risk Charter and related Policy
- Creation of new terms of reference for Council's Community Asset Committees which replace the former Section 86 Committees.

These requirements were all adopted at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting.

As a result of the *Governance Rules* being adopted which outline the rules to conduct Council Meetings and delegated and/or joint delegated committees of Council, Council was also required to conduct a second review of Council's *Local Law No. 2 2020 – Meeting Procedures and Common Seal*. This Local Law was amended, parts rescinded, adopted and then gazetted at the November 2020 Council Meeting, to ensure the Local Law is compliant with legislative requirements. Together, the *Governance Rules* and the Local Law now provide a strong foundation for Council to manage its meetings in a professional and structured way.

The 2020 Act also outlines the timelines for the review of Council's *Councillor Code of Conduct Policy*. While the 2020 Act states that a Councillor Code of Conduct Policy does not have to be adopted until after Council's election in October 2021, an interim measure for a review of the current Policy is underway.

The development of the Councillor Induction Training Program will begin in early 2021, in line with South Gippsland Shire Council's election to be held in October. Creation of various training material has commenced, with the focus of also using online capabilities to ensure Council is able to target different communication methods for the Program to be effective.

Good Governance Framework

That Council provides a progress report and update on Council's Good Governance Framework.

Council continues to follow South Gippsland *Good Governance Framework* (SGSC Framework) (Appendix One), which was adopted in December 2019. It aims to guide good governance practices and priorities across the organisation.

In order to assist Council in making informed decisions and understanding how Council reports relate to the eight pillars of the *Good Governance Framework* and the four objectives of the *Council Plan*, a review of Council's reporting structure and process was conducted. Changes to templates, reporting and further adjustments to the ability of capturing data, have been made.

The outcome of this review has streamlined internal processes and created the ability to identify the decisions made for each *Council Plan* Objective and each pillar of the *Good Governance Framework*. This information will assist future Mayors to report to the community on the progress of the *Council Plan*. It will also assist Council to monitor the improvements being made to good governance practices. The Community will also be able to see how the various reports to Council align to both the *Council Plan* and the *Good Governance Framework*.

A range of other good governance projects have already been implemented with updated policies and plans adopted, improvements made to communication avenues with the community and further projects are under development.

The Good Governance Framework sets out:

- Good Governance Outcomes to be achieved;
- Eight Pillars of Good Governance to achieve the outcomes;
- Principles and behaviours that demonstrate good governance in practice and;
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that assist in monitoring performance trends.

Council's activities that have taken place under each Pillar of the *Good Governance Framework* is outlined in the following pages.



Good Governance Framework Summary

Outcomes of Good Governance

Sustainable Outcomes Achieved

Shire Health, Wellbeing and Economy Strengthened

Efficient (Quality) Community Services

Council Directions and Priorities Achieved

Informed Decisions Made

Drives Outcomes

Pillars that Drive the Achievement of Outcomes

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|----------|--|
| 1 | Direction and Leadership | 5 | Communications and Community Engagement |
| 2 | Culture and Behaviour | 6 | Capability |
| 3 | Decision Making | 7 | Risk and Compliance |
| 4 | Structure Systems and Policies | 8 | Monitoring and Performance Review |

Principles and Behaviours of Good Governance

Good Governance is...

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--|
| accountable | equitable and inclusive | good relationships |
| transparent | effective and efficient | trust |
| the rule of law | participatory | appropriate decision making |
| responsive | diversity | acting with integrity and impartiality |

Key Performance Indicators

Legislated measures required under Local Government Performance and Reporting Framework

External measures required by Government or auditing requirements

Council measures required under Community Vision and Council Plan

Corporate measures based on SGSC data for internal and external organisational management





Department measures based on SGSC data for service standards, performance and team based requirements

Individual measures based on personal work plans

Actions Summary

The following tables outline the summary of actions under each pillar of Council's Good Governance Framework - to ensure the suite of financial governance plans and Council policies are reviewed and refined to prepare the foundation for the Council to be elected on October 2021. All 47 action items are either complete or on track.



| Progress Status Definition | Number |
|---|--------|
|  Action item has achieved target and is completed. No further action is required. Complete | 23 |
|  The progress performance for the action item is achieving target. All elements of the action item is on track. On Track | 25 |
|  The progress performance for the action item is close to target and is being monitored to achieve target. All elements of the action item is improving to 'On-Track' or 'Complete' status. Monitor | - |
|  Action item has been placed on-hold due to a set of circumstances or changes in legislation. On Hold | - |



Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

ON TRACK

1

Community Leadership Program

Expressions of Interest were advertised during April to May 2020 for community members to join Council's Community Leadership Program. At the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting, Council appointed 20 participants to be part of the Program. Two participants have exited the program since being appointed.

The Program was launched on 28 October 2020 at a virtual online event. Since October 2020, the group has participated in a teamwork workshop, a session on "Getting to Know South Gippsland", heard from Council's Chief Executive Officer and also explored the values of leadership with an external facilitator. The third session held in December 2020, explored emotional intelligence in leadership and how to best work and communicate with others.

The second part of this project includes the Youth Leadership Program which will have an uptake of 70 participants. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Program has not commenced and is on track to commence in early 2021.

COMPLETE

2

Council Plan 2020-2024

Proposed new *Council Plan* endorsed at the April 2020 Council Meeting. Formal public consultation process took place between 28 April to 28 May 2020.

The *Council Plan 2020-2024* was endorsed by Council at the 24 June 2020 Council Meeting.

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>3 Capital Works Program – Priority Projects</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>At the 22 July 2020 Council Meeting, Council endorsed the following 2020/21 Priority Projects for advocating to the State and Federal Governments for funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korumburra Streetscape Project; and • Leongatha Early years Learning Centre Project. <p>Council submitted an application for funding as part of the State Government's <i>Building Blocks Early Childhood Infrastructure Program</i> in July 2020 and the submission was successful.</p> <p>A \$2.38 million grant application to the <i>Department of Education Building Blocks Capacity Building Grant Funding Program</i> has been secured. Council has also committed \$3 million in the budget for this \$5.38 million project.</p> |
| <p>4 Long Term Financial Strategies</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Review completed November 2019.</p> |
| <p>5 Community Vision</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>As per the 2020 Act, the scope of the Community Vision is not due until October 2022 after the Council Election in 2021.</p> <p>In the interim, Council has considered at the 27 May 2020 Council Meeting to prepare a draft governance and engagement structure, to assist the new Council in the development of the Community Vision.</p> |
| <p>6 Appointment of Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer of South Gippsland Shire Council was appointed on 5 February 2020.</p> |
| <p>7 Attendance at One Gippsland (formerly Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN))</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Administrator Chair and Chief Executive Officer representing South Gippsland at One Gippsland meetings. There has been 100 per cent attendance at these monthly meetings by the Administrator Chair from July 2020 to December 2020.</p> |

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

ON TRACK

8
NEW

2021/22 Annual Initiatives of the Council Plan 2020-2024

Consultation with Management, Executive Leadership Team and Council has been conducted to establish the Annual Initiatives for the year 2021/22 as part of the *Council Plan 2020-2024*.

These initiatives are on schedule to be adopted with the 2021/22 Annual Budget process by 30 June 2021.

ON TRACK

9
NEW

Establish a Corporate Forward Plan for the organisation

A Forward Planner has been developed by Executive Leadership Team and Council to establish key corporate milestones over the next twelve months.

This includes identified annual initiatives, policy and strategy reviews, legislative requirements and future reporting for the transition to Council's Election in October 2021.

COMPLETE

10
NEW

Road Management - Strategic Road Projects for Advocacy

At the 22 July 2020 Council Meeting, Council endorsed the following 2020/21 Strategic Road Projects for advocating to the State and Federal Governments for funding:

- Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route – Stage 2;
- South Gippsland Highway, Korumburra – Coal Creek bends;
- Bass Highway – Leongatha to Anderson;
- South Gippsland Highway – Grassy Spur realignment;
- Strzelecki Highway – Crightons Hill realignment; and
- Korumburra Streetscape – Commercial Street.

ON TRACK

11
NEW

Planning Scheme - Environmental Audit Overlay

The Planning department conducted an Environmental Audit Overlay which aims to identify potentially contaminated land requiring further investigation before sensitive land uses can occur.

This helps to protect the environment, human health and improve liveability within the Shire. This Planning Scheme Amendment was adopted at the 25 November 2020 Council Meeting and advertised for a six week period.

ON TRACK

12
NEW

Administrator Self-Assessment

The Administrators commenced trialling a Self-Assessment process for Administrators/Councillors. The externally facilitated pilot program was run in December 2020 and aimed to identify improvement opportunities on an ongoing basis. The program will continue to be reviewed in 2021.

Pillar Two - Culture and Behaviour

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Councillor Code of Conduct review | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Scheduled for review in 2021 as per the 2020 Act this is due after Council Election in October 2021. An interim measure for a draft <i>Councillor Code of Conduct Policy</i> is underway and will be considered by Council in 2021.</p> |
| 2 | Council to develop shared values for the community and the organisation | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>In progress with the Council Plan's community consultation process and the development and collation of the Organisational Effectiveness Survey.</p> |
| 3 NEW | Review of the Customer Service Charter | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>The Customer Service Charter is being redrafted and will be completed in early 2021.</p> |
| 4 NEW | Review of the Health and Wellbeing Program | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>An extensive review of Council's Health and Wellbeing Program has been conducted to formalise the Program around a proven Health and Wellbeing framework promoted by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for workplaces.</p> <p>This is currently being implemented within the organisation to support staff in health and wellbeing.</p> |

Pillar Three - Decision Making

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1 | 2019/20 Annual Budget | COMPLETE Reviewed and completed July 2019. |
| 2 | Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 | COMPLETE Reviewed and completed July 2019 and reporting against the Annual initiatives complete in the 2019/20 Annual Report. |
| 3 | Community Participation in Meetings with Council Policy (C65) | ON TRACK C65 - is currently being reviewed and on schedule to be presented to Council at the April 2021 Council Meeting. |
| 4 | Management of Unreasonable Conduct Policy (C79) | ON TRACK New policy currently under development and is on schedule to be approved by April 2021. |
| 5 | Local Law No.3 2010 (Meeting Procedures) reviewed before sunset date of 4 June 2020 | COMPLETE Final adjustments of the <i>Local Law No.2 2020 – Processes of Municipal Government - Meeting Procedures and Common Seal</i> were adopted at the 25 November 2020 Council Meeting. These adjustments were made to avoid duplication and overlap with the <i>Governance Rules</i> . A formal public submission process was held for the month of October 2020 in accordance with legislative requirements. |
| 6 | 2020/21 Annual Budget | COMPLETE Proposed 2020/21 Annual Budget endorsed at the 22 April 2020 Council Meeting. Community consultation took place from 28 April to 28 May 2020. The Annual Budget also included a \$2M Community Support Package in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. It was adopted at the 24 June 2020 Council Meeting. |
| 7 NEW | Council meeting and briefing schedule structure review | COMPLETE Council conducted a review of the Council Meeting and Strategic Briefing sessions schedule for 2021. Council Meetings have moved to the third Wednesday of the month and were adopted by Council at the 16 December 2020 Council Meeting. |
| 8 NEW | Review of Conflict of Interest as per Act 2020 | COMPLETE Reviewed and updated reporting of how Council staff report conflict of interests as per the revised guidelines in the 2020 Act that came into affect 24 October 2020. |
| 9 NEW | Establish Terms of Reference and membership of Council's Economic Development and Visitor Attraction Advisory Groups | COMPLETE Council appointed 14 independent members (7 to each Committee) and endorsed the Terms of Reference for each Committee at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting. |
| 10 NEW | Establish Terms of Reference and membership of Council's Community Infrastructure Advisory Committee | ON TRACK Council adopted the Terms of Reference for the Community Infrastructure Advisory Committee at the 23 September 2020 Council Meeting. Expression of Interest for membership of this Committee is currently in progress and will be finalised in early 2021. |

Pillar Four - Structure, Systems and Policies

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 South Gippsland Shire Council Good Governance Framework</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Reporting against South Gippsland's Good Governance Framework has been adopted at the following Council Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 December 2019 Council Meeting; • 22 July 2020 Council Meeting; and • Scheduled to be adopted at the February 2021 Council Meeting. <p>Development of a draft Corporate Plan for internal management of major operational matters is also currently being considered.</p> |
| <p>2 Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy (C51)</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>C51 - has been reviewed, updated and adopted by Council at the 22 July 2020 Council Meeting. This was before the deadline of 1 September 2020 to comply with the 2020 Act timelines.</p> |
| <p>3 Sound Recording of Council Meetings Policy (C48)</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>C48 - being reviewed and updated for consideration by Council in early 2021.</p> |
| <p>4 Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy (C67)</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>C67 - being reviewed and updated for consideration by Council in early 2021.</p> |
| <p>5 NEW Governance policies (C82) adopted by Council</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council undertook a review of corporate reporting and timelines against the 2020 Act to ensure it is compliant with legislative time frames. As part of phase 1, a number of requirements were due for implementation by 1 September 2020. The following were endorsed at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Rules (including Council Election Policy) • Public Transparency Policy • Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy • Delegated Committees and Asset Committee Review • Audit & Risk Charter and Committee <p>As part of phase 2, forward plans have been developed and work has commenced on policies due by 30 April 2021, including the review and consultation of Council's <i>Community Engagement Policy</i>.</p> |
| <p>6 NEW Review of Council's Organisational Structure</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>A new organisational structure was developed to respond to a number of changed strategic drivers, in particular the new <i>Council Plan</i> and the new 2020 Act. The structure aims to create a clearer line of sight for staff and the community between Council's strategic direction and Council's delivery of services. Consultation took place with staff internally in August 2020 and came into affect in September 2020. In addition to the Chief Executive's Office (includes Customer Information and Advocacy) there are three Directorates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic & Community Development Directorate • Sustainable Infrastructure Directorate • Performance & Innovation Directorate |



Pillar Five - Communication and Community Engagement

ON TRACK

1

Communications to the community on Council activities review

Communications include:

- Developing a Shop Local campaign to support local businesses impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Developing, testing and rolling-out dynamic webforms to allow better opportunities for community members to access Council services through the website.
- Refining the use of social media advertising.
- Compiling and distributing Noticeboard, which is available on Council's website, on Facebook and in the Sentinel Times, the Foster Mirror and the Mirboo North Times each week.
- Providing COVID-19 support: signage, dedicated intranet space, forms, flyers, brochures and documentation.
- Developing a logo and newsletter template for the Leongatha Revitalisation (Bair Street) Project.
- Administrators maintained phone contact with community and business groups during COVID-19.
- Continued live streaming of Council Meetings.

ON TRACK

2

Community Engagement Policy (C06) adopted

The draft *Community Engagement Policy* review process was held from 18 November 2020 to 2 December 2020 inclusive for the public to provide feedback. Community members had an opportunity to review the draft Policy through an OurSay online forum and provide details on how they wish to be engaged with in the future.

The Policy is on schedule to be presented to Council at the February 2021 Council Meeting for endorsement before the 2020 Act deadline of 1 March 2021.

COMPLETE

3

Public Transparency Policy (New) adopted

Council developed a new *Public Transparency Policy* at the 22 July 2020 Council Meeting before the deadline of 1 September 2020 as per section 57 of the 2020 Act.

ON TRACK

4
NEW

Community Engagement Strategy adopted

The draft *Community Engagement Strategy* review process is underway in line with the *Community Engagement Policy* review process.

South Gippsland Shire Council - Council Meeting No 453 - 24 February 2021
The Strategy is on schedule to be presented to Council at the March 2021 Council Meeting for endorsement.

Pillar Five - Communication and Community Engagement

ON TRACK

5
NEW Review of Council's website

Review of Council's website is currently underway with a number of structural changes already made to date.

Further refinements will be made in 2021 with dynamic forms to be rolled out over the same time period to improve opportunities for community members to do more online.

Pillar Six - Capability

ON TRACK

1 Councillor Induction Program

Councillor Induction Program and training is on schedule to begin in March 2021 in line with South Gippsland Shire Council Election to be held in October 2021. Candidate and Councillor (once elected) training is mandatory as per the 2020 Act.

ON TRACK

2 Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan

Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, Council reviewed and revised Council's Business Continuity Plan in February 2020. Council moved staff in March 2020 to work remotely, promptly and efficiently to ensure their safety.

Despite this change, Council was able to continually provide the majority of services to the community. As restrictions eased, Council has reopened recreation facilities, halls, pool facilities and Caravan Parks to the public in-line with government guidelines, ensuring preventative measures are in place for the safety of the community.



Pillar Seven - Risk and Compliance

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Report on the Audit & Risk Committee Chair | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Open public session held on 28 October 2020 by South Gippsland's Shire Council Audit & Risk Committee Chair.</p> |
| 2 | Risk Management Framework - Annual Risk and Strategic Risk Update to Council | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council's Risk Management Framework provides for an Annual Risk Strategic Briefing to Council on the key strategic risks impacting the organisation which was held on 19 February 2020.</p> |
| 3 | Procurement Policy (C32) | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>C65 - reviewed, updated and was adopted at the 24 June 2020 Council Meeting. The Policy aims to strengthen the procurement of goods and services from local suppliers.</p> |
| 4 NEW | Audit & Risk Committee Charter established | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Section 53 of the 2020 Act requires all Victorian councils to establish an Audit & Risk Committee to set out the requirements and responsibilities of the Committee's membership.</p> <p>Section 54 also requires Council to prepare and approve its first <i>Audit & Risk Committee Charter Policy</i> and establish this Committee on or before 1 September 2020.</p> <p>Council reviewed and adopted both of these requirements for the Audit & Risk Committee at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting.</p> |

Pillar Eight - Monitoring and Performance Review

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 1 | Audit of the Capital Works planning and scheduling program | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Internal Audit review completed. Recommendations are being prepared into an Implementation Plan for the Audit & Risk Committee in December 2020 to consider prior to commencing the actions arising.</p> <p>As part of this review a draft review of a <i>Capital Works Program Policy</i> has commenced and is being carried out in conjunction with the development of the Project Management Framework and <i>Social Community Infrastructure Blueprint</i> review.</p> |
| 2 | Organisational Effectiveness Survey | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Distributed to staff in November 2019. Due to COVID-19 Pandemic another staff effectiveness survey was distributed to staff to ensure that Council followed the Business Continuity Plan appropriately and working from home arrangements were suitable.</p> |
| 3 | 2019/20 Quarterly financial and performance reporting | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Organisational Performance Reports were adopted by Council for each 2019/20 financial quarter in November 2019, February 2020 and May 2020.</p> <p>Year to date 2019/20 Financial Performance Reports were adopted by Council at the September 2019, December 2019, March 2020 and May 2020 Council Meeting.</p> |
| 4 | Integrated planning, monitoring and reporting framework (LGPRF) | <p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Internal audit conducted by VAGO in September 2020 completed to ensure Council is meeting audit and financial legislative requirements. VAGO's Independent Auditor's Report and certification of the Financial Statement and the Performance Statement were achieved and presented in the 2019/20 Annual Report at the 23 September 2020 Council Meeting.</p> |
| 5 NEW | 2020/21 Quarterly financial and performance reporting | <p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Progress on the 2020/21 Annual Initiatives of the <i>Council Plan</i> was reported in Council's Organisational Performance Report for the period July to September 2020 and adopted by Council at the 25 November 2020 Council Meeting.</p> <p>In this report as at end of September 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 per cent of the Council Plan Measures of Success indicators are on track or target achieved; • 100 per cent of the 2020/21 Annual Initiatives are on track or have target achieved; and • 76 per cent of the 111 Capital Works and Major Works Program initiatives for 2020/21 have been completed or are on track. <p>Further progress on the 2020/21 Annual Initiatives will be presented to Council at the February 2021 Council Meeting.</p> <p>Year to date Financial Performance Reports were adopted by Council at the October 2020 Council Meeting for the period July to September 2020.</p> |



Advancing Major Projects within the Shire

Mirboo North Pool Redevelopment

The overall works are progressing well for the Mirboo North Pool Redevelopment Project and are 75 per cent complete. Establishment of the new pavillion structure is 95 per cent complete as at end of December 2020.

The shallow end structure of the new 25 metre long, eight lane wide swimming pool is complete.

The deep end of the pool is complete and pool tiling is anticipated to commence in January 2021.

This project secured \$600,000 in Federal Government funding and \$3.6M from the State Government Community Sport Infrastructure Loan Scheme.



The Mirboo North community contributed \$1 million towards fundraising for the project.

Foster Indoor Stadium Redevelopment

At the 16 December 2020 Council Meeting, the contract was awarded for the project construction.

Works are due to commence in January 2021 which will provide the current facility with a compliant basketball court and new extension consisting of upgraded change rooms, public amenities, foyer, meeting rooms, kitchen, and ancillary works.

This project secured \$2.26M in State Government funding from the Community Sports Infrastructure Program and Council has committed \$253,000.



The Foster Indoor Stadium Redevelopment will enhance liveability and promote health and wellbeing for current and future generations.

Korumburra Community Hub

The location of the Korumburra Community Hub has been finalised at 15 Little Commercial Street. Detailed design documentation has been completed.

Tender documentation for construction has been prepared and is ready for advertisement, however, is dependent on the outcome of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) appeal to Planning Permit.

State Government funding of \$5M as part of the Community Infrastructure Loans Scheme and \$750,000 as part of the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program have been secured.



The role of the community hub is to provide a focus for community life centered on a modern library.

Korumburra Streetscape

Concept plans have been completed which includes works to the Korumburra Railway Station (Upper Commercial Street), Commercial Street and Little Commercial Street.

Designs underway for Upper Commercial Street and Little Commercial Street and is being integrated with the Korumburra Community Hub project.

\$450,000 in Federal Government funding and \$5M from the Community Infrastructure Loans Scheme has been secured.



The Korumburra Streetscape project will revitalise the CBD of Korumburra.



Advancing Major Projects within the Shire

Leongatha Revitalisation Project - Bair Street

Works are progressing well on Bair Street, Leongatha as part of the Revitalisation Project for the town.

South Gippsland Water replacement of the sewer main is complete. Water mains have been relocated and the underground power has been constructed. Streetscape works continue to end of December 2020, including:

- demolition and concreting works from south side of McCartin Street from Bair Street to Gollers Lane;
- road surfacing and line marking in Bair Street between McCartin Street and Lyon Street; and
- trenching works on Young Street from Canty Lane to Bair Street.

This project secured \$4.2M in Federal and State Government funding and Council has committed \$1.2M.



\$5.4M

PROJECT COST

The Leongatha Revitalisation Project provides the means to create a vibrant CBD for Leongatha.

Leongatha Early Learning Centre

The Leongatha Early Learning Centre is a Council Priority Project to be located in Symmons Street in Leongatha.

It will incorporate a kindergarten, long day care, supported playgroup and space for family services.

A contract was awarded for the detailed design and documentation in November 2020 with design work now underway.

This project secured \$2.37M in State Government funding from the Department of Education's Building Blocks Early Years Infrastructure Grants and Council has committed \$3M.



The Centre will ensure access to vital facilities and services for families.

Great Southern Rail Trail

The removal of rail assets (steel rail and sleepers) between Leongatha and Nyora is nearing completion by end of December 2020. The planning and design works are complete.

Advertisement for the tender contract of constructing the gravel trail between Leongatha and Nyora closed on 17 November 2020. A contractor has been appointed by Council in December 2020.

A grant application to Regional Infrastructure Fund of \$500,000 has been secured to extend the rail trail between Leongatha and Korumburra.

A application totalling \$800,000 in State Government grant funding has been approved for the extension between Korumburra and Nyora.



The Great Southern Rail Trail extension will enhance tourism opportunities in South Gippsland.



Chief Executive Officer
Kerry Ellis



Administrators

Christian Zahra (Deputy Chair)
Julie Eisenbise (Chair)
Rick Brown (Administrator)



Appendices

Appendix One: Good Governance Framework

OUTCOME OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

SHIRE HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND ECONOMY STRENGTHENED

EFFICIENT (QUALITY) COMMUNITY SERVICES PROVIDED

COUNCIL DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES ACHIEVED

INFORMED DECISIONS MADE

SGSC
GOOD GOVERNANCE OVERARCHING FRAMEWORK

DRIVES OUTCOME

1 DIRECTION & LEADERSHIP

- Community Vision
- Community Leadership Development Program
- Council Plan (4 years)
- Corporate Plan
- Financial Plan (10+years)
- Budget and Capital Works Program
- Asset Management Plan (10+ years)
- Financial Strategies
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- South Gippsland Planning Scheme
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Road Management Plan
- Strategies that guide Shire development and services

2 CULTURE & BEHAVIOUR

- Council and corporate values aligned
- Councillor Charter
- Customer Service Charter
- Communication procedures between Council and staff
- Complaint Management Policy and procedures
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Roles of Councillors, CEO and employees understood
- Learning and Development Programs and policies
- Diversity in Council and Senior Officers
- Volunteers support and recognition
- Inclusive employment practices that reflect community diversity
- Councillor Gift Policy

3 DECISION MAKING

- Strong Governance Policies and processes to support decision making
- Local Laws
- Formal schedule of delegations
- Effective internal/external Committee structures
- Evidence based decisions
- Record of decisions and implementation plans
- Council agenda and minutes
- External expertise is used as appropriate
- Council and Staff Conflict of Interest managed

4 STRUCTURE, SYSTEMS & POLICIES

- Good Governance Framework
- Functional organisational structure
- Electoral system and structure
- Policy and procedures to support electoral systems
- Council policies
- Council meeting structures and systems
- Corporate systems, processes and procedures
- Councillor Expense Policy
- CEO policies
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy
- Departmental systems, processes and procedures

5 COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community Engagement Strategy and Policy
- Communication Strategy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Freedom of Information (FOI) and Privacy management
- Media Policy
- Council website

6 CAPABILITY

- Workforce Plan
- Recruitment and retention of skilled staff
- Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan
- Robust HR systems and policies
- Resources to support Mayor and Councillors
- Staff and Councillor training in bullying, OH&S, diversity and discrimination
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Induction training
- Management of poor/under performance
- Training in corporate systems, policies, processes and procedures

7 RISK & COMPLIANCE

- Legislative compliance
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Privacy policies and confidentiality procedures
- Fraud and Corruption Policy and Control Plan
- Independent third party audits
- Legislated Registers
- Insurance, liability and litigation controls
- Procurement Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure protections
- Ordinary & Primary Returns and Related Parties Disclosures

8 MONITORING & PERFORMANCE REVIEW

- Self-assessment of the Good Governance Framework
- Annual Report and quarterly financial and performance reports
- Self-assessment of Councillors against Charter
- Audit and Risk Charter annual work plan
- Policy Review Framework
- Integrated planning, monitoring and reporting framework (LGPRF)
- Audit recommendations monitored and reported
- Bi-annual Audit and Risk Report
- Service Reviews
- Staff engagement surveys
- Staff performance reviews
- Exit interviews

PRINCIPLES AND BEHAVIOURS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE QUALITY AND FAIRNESS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT (based on MAV Good Governance Guide)

- 1. Good Governance is accountable:** obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions made on behalf of the community.
- 2. Good Governance is transparent:** people should be able to follow and understand the decision making process.
- 3. Good Governance follows the rule of law:** this means decisions are consistent with relevant legislation or common law and are within the powers of council.
- 4. Good Governance is responsive:** aim is to serve the needs of the entire community while balancing competing interests in an appropriate manner.
- 5. Good governance is equitable and inclusive:** community interests and diversity of opinions have been considered by council in the decision making process.
- 6. Good governance is effective and efficient:** Local Government should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.
- 7. Good governance is participatory:** anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have a reasonable opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision.
- 8. Diversity:** reflects the diversity of community through representative structures, consultative structures and employment practices.
- 9. Build and sustain good relationships:** between Mayor and Council, Council and administration and Council and Community.
- 10. Build trust:** establish good communication, clarify roles, keep an outward focus.
- 11. Decision making:** establish good processes and delegations to ensure decisions consider local community and broader municipal interests, are consistent with the Strategic Plan and take account of financial implications, are within the powers of Council and recognise natural justice principle.
- 12. Act with integrity and impartiality:** be honest and diligent, avoid conflicts of interest, treat people with respect, act lawfully and show leadership.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Legislated measures required under Local Government Performance and Reporting Framework

External measures required by Government or auditing requirements

Council measures required under Community Vision and Council Plan

Corporate measures based on SGSC data for internal and external organisational management requirements

Department measures based on SGSC data for service standards, performance and team based requirements

Individual measures based on personal work plans