

Administrators' Community Update - August 2021



South Gippsland
Shire Council

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*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Mirboo North and Surrounds

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.



Message from the Chair Administrator

It is with a great deal of pleasure that we present the *Administrators' Community Update Report* as our final community update before the end of our term in office. Our term as Administrators can be seen in several quite distinct phases. When we first arrived at South Gippsland Shire Council, the organisation had been through a turbulent time; with Council removed by an Act of Parliament. It was clear to us that a great deal of work needed to occur in order for the Council to be able to reconnect with the community.

As we come towards the end of our term we can see the difference in both the organisation and the community, compared to when we began. A collaborative approach to working together to deliver outcomes with, and for, the community has replaced the initial guarded and reactive approaches we perceived in the first few months after our arrival.

There is also a growing confidence in the community that Council is on the right track. This confidence has underpinned partnerships with the community and has led to projects such as the Mirboo North Pool, the Great Southern Rail Trail, the Foster Indoor Stadium Redevelopment, the suite of projects to revitalise Korumburra and the renewal of Bair Street in Leongatha. We are confident we are really going to see South Gippsland fulfil its potential into the future with the completion of these major capital work projects.

The introduction of the *Economic Development, Visitor Economy* and *Community Infrastructure Advisory Committees* and our re-established *Community Asset Committees* are also great examples of engaging community members in the process of decision making and providing input into important initiatives along the way.

We are proud that we have strengthened relationships within the organisation and more broadly with the community, key stakeholders and local businesses. Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, and all the implications for the organisation that it brought, both 2020 and 2021 have been significant in terms of what we've been able to achieve together.

Being able to support local businesses and community members through the COVID-19 Pandemic with Council's *\$2 million Community Support Package*, has provided a financial buffer for local businesses and community groups. The staged incremental implementation of the support package has allocated funds to community needs not covered by other Government incentives and the flexible approach we have taken has meant we have been in a position to respond to the community and businesses as the impacts of the Pandemic have become more apparent. Operationally that work has been led by our Chief Executive Officer, Kerryn Ellis who along with the rest of our team has done outstanding work ensuring maximum value to the community through the Council package of support.



The most recent major initiatives that have been provided as part of this Program include: providing a free Flu Immunisation Program for 2021; allocating grant funding to our sporting clubs and insurance rebates for community groups; dedicating \$85,000 to the 'Community Connection Through Arts Package' and \$235,000 to the Economic and Visitor Economy Strategy Implementation Package. All of these things have a real impact now and into the future right across the region.

We are delighted with the success of the *Community Leadership Development Program* that has been established. Council appointed and welcomed 20 successful applicants to the second intake of the *Community Leadership Program* that started in early July 2021 and is currently continuing. The first intake of the Program had 18 participants and was very successful. It covered a range of topics, such as Emotional Intelligence, Strategic Leadership, Culture and Diversity, Networking, Public Speaking, Teamwork, Values and Governance.

The *Community Leadership Development Program* aims to equip participants with the skills to work with others effectively, strengthen leadership, manage conflict, delegate and meet objectives. All of these skills learnt on the journey of the Program will positively influence the building of relationships and support the development of local communities across South Gippsland well into the future. This initiative is one of the most significant achievements throughout our time here. The goodwill and enthusiasm of this Program's participants is inspiring, as is their genuine desire to learn and to work together to make South Gippsland the best it can be.

The community is preparing to have democratically elected Councillors back-in-office, and the organisation has embraced a range of changes to set in place a welcoming, supportive environment for the new Council.

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 professionalism and ease of transition for the next Council. There's a genuine dedication within the organisation to have the groundwork laid for the new Councillors. This is evidenced by the pleasing and improved results in the *Customer Satisfaction Annual Survey* results. This will enable the new Council to build on a strong foundation in terms of public trust.

It is into this exciting, positive environment that we're hoping candidates for Council will nominate; Councillors who will want to work with each other, the organisation and the community they represent, to achieve outstanding 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 be confident everything has been set up in readiness to help them to be successful.

Our work here has also delivered the important good governance requirements which formed the second main responsibility for our term in office. Much of this work has been conducted behind the scenes after endorsing the *Good Governance Framework*; reviewing and improving policies, strategies and procedures to align with the new *Local Government Act 2020*, restructuring Council briefing and meeting day processes, finding better ways to place customers first and broadening community engagement.

Fundamental to the governance improvements we have overseen at Council have been the adoption of three significant strategic governance policies aimed at supporting the new Council to form a successful team, namely: the *Governance Rules*, *Councillor Code of Conduct* and the *Councillor Self-Assessment Policy* and process. These documents establish good governance practices that encourage self/team assessment of Councillors' performance, define behavioural principles expected of every Councillor and governs the requirements of all Council meetings.

Together these three policies, along with a suite of further governance policies reviewed and adopted in the past two years, form a contemporary package of good governance tools that, if used appropriately, will result in a new Council that the community and the organisation can be proud to work with.

During our term we appointed a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Kerry Ellis and despite the challenges of work from home rules, Ms Ellis has successfully led the staff through a number of challenging situations and implemented many positive changes within the organisation. We would like to commend the resilience and resourcefulness of the CEO and Officers throughout our term of office. The teams have adjusted to the many changes along the way and look forward to transitioning to a new Council based on the sound foundations established. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, all Council Officers have worked through the rolling changes – whether that was working from home or with COVID-19-safe practices out in the field, or in the office.

Finally, we would also like to commend and thank all the people of South Gippsland for how they have supported us throughout our term in office. Every single person we have had the pleasure of working with has contributed in their own way to making our term something that provided benefit to the people of the region. I would like to make particular note of the efforts of parents, front-line health workers, volunteers and local business people and associations that have worked tirelessly through the COVID-19 Pandemic, along with all the emergency services, community members and Council Officers who have helped others when so many of our areas were hit by the recent storms. The inherent qualities and resilience of the South Gippsland communities really came to the fore front throughout this time.

As we come near the end of our term at South Gippsland Shire, we want to extend our appreciation to everyone for their warm welcome and support through two challenging, yet successful years.

We wish the in-coming Council every success.



Julie Eisenbise

Chair Administrator

Advancing Major Projects within the Shire

Mirboo North Pool Redevelopment

All works on this project are now finished with the contractor achieving Practical Completion in mid-August 2021. The works included the construction of a new 25 metre long, eight lane wide swimming pool, a new toddlers pool and a new Splash Park plus concourse and ramp concrete works.

The works also included the construction of a new pavilion. The filling of the pool took place in mid-July 2021 and commissioning of the pool took place on 29 July 2021 with a training session involving the pool construction contractor, Council's pool maintenance contractor, YMCA and Council staff.

The main outstanding item of works is the application of the Splash Park concrete coating product which will occur in the warmer Spring conditions. Significant delays have occurred over the last six-months due to COVID-19 restrictions and cold and wet weather conditions which severely impacted the tiling activity in particular.



\$5.6M
PROJECT COST

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

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

Foster Indoor Stadium Redevelopment

At the 16 December 2020 Council Meeting, the contract award was approved for the project construction. Works commenced in January 2021 and are progressing well.

Works completed to date include demolition, piling, concrete slab, structural steel erection, concrete blockwork and timber framing, with roof construction works currently underway.

Progress of works has been impacted by wet weather and some difficulties with supply of materials, in particular structural steel. Completion of the project is expected by late 2021.

The stadium 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.



\$2.5M
PROJECT COST

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

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

Korumburra Community Hub

The Korumburra Community Hub facility will include the library, Milpara Community House and home to other community groups. Detailed design documentation has been completed.

The tender process for the Korumburra Hub was originally programmed for October 2020 but significantly delayed by an outcome of a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) appeal to Planning Permit. The VCAT matter was settled in late March 2021 and enabled the project to proceed.

Tender documentation for construction was advertised on 15 May 2021 and closed on 22 June 2021, with the appointed contractor approved at the 21 July 2021 Council Meeting. The contractor is currently working on pre-construction activities with works expected to commence on site in September 2021 and scheduled for completion in late 2022.

Consultation also took place for the official name for the Korumburra Hub from March 2021 to 2 April 2021. Submitted names were evaluated against naming criteria and the shortlisted names were advertised in June 2021.



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

All votes were collated and the name with the majority of votes is the 'Korumburra Community Hub' which was officially adopted by Council at the August 2021 Council Meeting.

Korumburra Streetscape

Korumburra Streetscape Project

The Project includes three distinct components being Upper Commercial Street (Railway Station Precinct), Little Commercial Street Precinct and Commercial Street,

Upper Commercial Street

This component involves the construction of a new car park comprising of at least 30 new parking spaces with associated access and infrastructure in the Korumburra Railway Station Precinct. Designs are currently being developed with works anticipated to commence in 2021/22. Total cost for this project is estimated to be \$700,000 with funding secured of \$450,000 as part of the Federal Government - Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

Little Commercial Street Precinct and Commercial Street Component

An application to the Victorian State Government's Community Infrastructure Loan Scheme for \$5 million is secured for these two components of the project.

- *Little Commercial Street Precinct component* - in March 2021, Council announced the purchase of the 'Top of the Town' site in Korumburra, which has been secured to help facilitate traffic movements and parking arrangements around the development of the Korumburra Community Hub. Demolition works at this site are expected to commence in September 2021.



\$5 million from the State Government's Community Infrastructure Loans Scheme has been secured and \$450,000 in Federal Government funding for the Upper Commercial Street component of the Project

- The design has been well progressed in preparation for construction in the 2021/22 financial year.
- *Commercial Street* - the detailed designs for this final component will be developed following the design of Little Commercial Street.

Although the loan has been approved, it was identified that there is further opportunity to seek additional funding towards the Commercial Street component of the Project in 2020/21. It has been recommended that this component remains a



Leongatha Revitalisation Project

Advancing Major Projects within the Shire

Leongatha Revitalisation Project - Bair Street

Works are completed on Bair Street, Leongatha as part of the *Revitalisation Project* for the town with the recent completion of the final civil works, installation of street furniture and landscaping works including the associated irrigation system.

South Gippsland Water replaced the water mains in 2019 and the under grounding of the power services was completed in early 2021.

An opening event is planned for 11 September 2021 to coincide with the annual Daffodil Festival that is to be held in Leongatha.

This project secured \$2.7 million in Federal Government funding and \$1.5 million in State Government funding. Council has committed \$1.94 million.



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

A contract was awarded for the detailed design and documentation in November 2020 with design works complete. Council officers, key stakeholder groups, and the appointed architects have worked together to develop and refine the concept design of the facility

Tenders for this project were advertised on 17 July 2021, with a closing date of 20 August 2021. It is expected that a preferred tenderer will be approved at the September Council Meeting. The target completion date for the project is late 2022.

\$5.4M
PROJECT COST



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

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

Great Southern Rail Trail - Extension

Construction of the Rail Trail extension is well underway for the two main contracts:

Construction of the gravel trail, works include:

- Development of a three metre wide, 36 kilometre long gravel trail between Leongatha Station and Nyora.
- Rehabilitation and cleaning of existing table drains along each side of the trail.
- Cleaning and redevelopment of existing cross-culverts.
- Construction of road crossing fencing, signage and gates.

Regional Infrastructure funding - \$500,000 for the extension between Leongatha and Korumburra.

State Government funding - \$800,000 for the extension between Korumburra and Nyora.

\$6.0M
PROJECT COST



Great Southern Rail Trail - Extension

Design and construction/rehabilitation of eight rail bridges, works include:

- The design of eight pedestrian bridges along the rail alignment.
- Rehabilitation of existing sub-structure, new bridge deck and barriers will be carried out on six of the eight existing rail bridges.
- Two of the eight bridges will be demolished and replaced with new bridges.

The Leongatha to Korumburra section of the trail is expected to be completed by late 2021 and the Korumburra to Nyora section is scheduled for early 2022 but will be dependent on weather conditions.



Mossvale Park

Report of Inquiry Recommendations

Response to Recommendation 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.*

Part i: Encourages widespread participation in community and civic life in the municipality

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 several local community groups, business associations, tourism identities, recreation reserves, sporting clubs and key stakeholders and participated in meetings and webinars throughout their term. Key stakeholders include (but not limited to):

- 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 have continued their great work ensuring community assets are managed, developed and maintained for the community. As per changes in legislation, the new terms of references for these Asset Committee's were adopted by Council at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting. As part of this process, Council was to conduct a twelve month review, no later than 31 August 2021, including consultation with these Committees to ensure they are appropriate and are required. Council conducted this full review and determined to revoke two Community Asset Committees as no longer required and maintain 12 existing Committees to continue to provide vital information to Council on asset use and needs.

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.

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 \$374,000.

Applications to Round Two of the Program closed on 31 March 2021. Council allocated over \$77,000 to 13 community groups. This funding is assisting and supporting community projects with a value of over \$211,000.

The submitted applications to the Community Grants Program are assessed by an Assessment Panel, comprising of Council officers and an independent external assessor, who score the applications using Council's adopted community grants guidelines. The Panel also includes two independent community representatives.

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.

In addition to the *Community Grants Program*, Council also funded over \$19,000 in the *Small Grants Program* that provides funding of up to \$1,000 for small projects within the Shire. A funding amount of over \$33,000 was also allocated to projects that require immediate funding as part of the *Emergency (Quick) Grant Program*. This Program aims to equip applicants for funding that require immediate attention of up to \$5,000 and are generally assessed within two weeks.



Koonwarra

\$2M COVID-19 Relief Community Support Package

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council adopted a \$2 million *COVID-19 Community Support Package Program* as part of the *2020/21 Annual Budget*. The initiatives funded under this Program are intended to:

- Provide targeted support and stimulus activities specific to the South Gippsland community and economy;
- Provide relief to businesses, not-for-profit organisations, community groups, families and individuals experiencing financial or social distress; and
- Aid with recovery and work towards restoration of the community and South Gippsland economic life provide vital economic, social, cultural health and wellbeing outcomes.

As part of the first phase of the Program, Council funded \$1.5 million and the second phase of the Program was endorsed for \$505,000 at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting. The initiatives throughout the Program included:

- Providing over 820 vaccinations, free of charge, over 17 sessions for Council's Flu Vaccine for the 2020 Program;
- 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;
- Recreation Reserve Income Offset - 22 Recreation Reserves received additional grant funding - value of \$126,000;
- Free Flu Immunisation Program for 2021 of \$25,000;
- Grants to Sporting Clubs of \$40,000;
- Insurance Rebate for Community Groups of \$40,000;
- Sustaining Community Connections Package of \$50,000;
- Economic and Visitor Economy Strategy Implementation Package of \$235,000;
- Community Connection Through Arts Package of \$85,000; and
- Community Support Package Effectiveness Evaluation of \$30,000.



Emergency and Immediate Works - \$2.6 million

Due to severe weather conditions that impacted South Gippsland on 9 June 2021, over \$2.6 million has been spent on the Emergency and Immediate works (so far) that resulted from this event. Council will be fully reimbursed for all eligible funding as part of the government's *Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Program*.



The Chair Administrator visited some of the emergency and immediate locations in Foster that were impacted by these storms, soon after the event had occurred. Since then, Council has continued to work to ensure the network is repaired to previous conditions.



Part ii: Supports the development of community leadership skills

Community Leadership Program

Council launched the expression-of-interest for the second intake of the *Community Leadership Program* in May 2021, with a start date in July 2021. A total of 20 participants were appointed to the Program at the 23 June 2021 Council Meeting.

These sessions follow on from the first successful intake of this Program that took place from October 2020 to March 2021. The sessions aim to equip participants with the skills to effectively work with others, strengthen their leadership capability, manage conflict, delegate and meet objectives.

It is hoped that these skills will then be used to positively influence and support the development of local communities across South Gippsland.

The first intake of the *Community Leadership Program* concluded on 17 March 2021 and had 18 participants.

The Program covered a range of topics, that included:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Strategic Leadership
- Culture and Diversity
- Local Government 101
- Collaboration and Networking
- Public Speaking
- Teamwork, Values and Governance

Participant Feedback...

Question: If you only had one word to describe the Community Leadership Program?

- Supportive
- Involving
- Inspiring
- Connections
- Valuable
- Journey
- Enlightening
- Engaging
- Useful
- Motivational
-WOW!

“...I am lucky to undertake this training...”

“...a great opportunity to grow and meet like minded people...”

“...It is worthwhile and very useful...”

“...an excellent way for meeting fascinating members of our community...”

Improvements to the Community Leadership Program

At the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting, Council endorsed a revised process in the selection of the shortlist of participants for the *Community Leadership Program*, after consultation with the first group of participants.

This revised process allows for replacement of participants who withdraw from the Program within the first four weeks. Replacement participants will have been previously shortlisted but not included in the initial intake due to all available places being filled. This will maintain the integrity of the Program as any replacement candidate will have been assessed as meeting the eligibility requirements for the Program. Should a vacancy occur within the first four weeks of the Program, the Chief Executive Officer has delegated authority to backfill from the next highest on the endorsed waiting list of applicants.

The proposed process also requires a member of the Executive Leadership Team or their delegate to participate on the Assessment Panel, establishing an Assessment Panel of four, including an independent member, which streamlines the selection process.

“...It is well worth it... we are all leaders in our own way...”

Part iii: Supports an improvement in the relationship between the Council and its community





Council's Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

Council conducted an annual *Customer Satisfaction Survey* for 2021 which provides an independent analysis of the community's perception of Council's performance. This information assists Council to understand community needs and concerns that can be used to inform the provision of Council services. This survey is also conducted in accordance with requirements under the *Local Government Act (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.






The 2021 Survey was conducted by the State Government appointed company - JWS Research. The 2021 Survey results are based on a sample size of 400 residents from across the Shire. The Survey was conducted between February and March 2021.

While improvements in all areas is still the outcome we are keen to see, the results have significantly improved in key areas since 2019. It is great to see that during our term as Administrators most areas have been restored to the general trend of previous years. A few areas have also declined from the previous year, that does concern us. Council's *Customer First Program* which is under development is aimed at improving customer service across the Council services.

The below table demonstrates the overall performance results of the 2021 Survey.

COUNCIL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS							
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
OVERALL PERFORMANCE							
<i>Overall satisfaction with Council's performance</i>	47	46	46	33	36	47	
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION							
<i>Satisfaction with Council's consultation and engagement</i>	47	47	48	40	41	44	
ADVOCACY/LOBBYING							
<i>Advocating and lobbying on behalf of the community</i>	47	46	45	39	41	46	
MAKING COMMUNITY DECISIONS							
<i>Decisions made in the interest of the community</i>	47	45	42	35	37	46	

COUNCIL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
SEALED LOCAL ROADS <i>Conditions of local sealed roads</i>	30	36	46	48	47	43	
CUSTOMER SERVICE <i>Overall Customer service performance across the organisation</i>	65	61	70	66	66	56	
OVERALL COUNCIL DIRECTION <i>Satisfaction with the direction of Council</i>	43	51	-	30	40	45	
VALUE FOR MONEY <i>Value of rates</i>	-	-	41	37	35	43	
WASTE MANAGEMENT <i>Satisfaction with waste management services</i>	-	-	65	65	71	61	

Community Networking and Engagement

Council's *Community Engagement Policy* was adopted by Council at the 24 February 2021 Council Meeting before the *Local Government Act 2020* deadline of 1 March 2021.

The review of Council's draft *Community Engagement Policy* was conducted from mid-November to early December 2020 via an online survey. Community members had an opportunity to review the draft Policy through an online forum and answer questions on how they 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.

The feedback was considered in the development of the Policy which is available on Council's website. The research and the feedback received during this consultation process, will be utilised by Council staff when developing future community engagement activities to ensure they meet community expectations.

In addition to the Policy revision process, Council's *Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2024* was revised and adopted at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting. This was reviewed, to maintain consistency between the two documents and to be in-line with Council's Community Engagement Framework.



Sandy Point

Report of Inquiry Recommendations

Response to Recommendation 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 One, 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 conduct its meetings in a professional and structured way.

The Act also outlines the timelines for the review of Council's *Councillor Code of Conduct Policy*. While the Act states that a Councillor Code of Conduct Policy does not have to be adopted until after a Council's election, it was determined that a major refresh of the Policy was required. The revised Policy now aligns with the standards of conduct for Councillors as outlined in the Act and the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*. It also addresses a specific requirement in the '*Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South Gippsland Shire Council – June 2019*' which was to be addressed by the Administrators. The objective is to support the in-coming Council and provide a sound foundation of Councillor conduct and behaviour. The Policy was endorsed by Council at the 18 August 2021 Council Meeting.

In addition to the legislated requirements, Council has reviewed and adopted or revoked various governance policies to ensure the suite of good governance policies are addressing gaps in the *Good Governance Framework*, or meeting organisational or future legislative requirements. The Administrators have considered 56 Council policies during their term. Thirty-seven policies have been reviewed and re-adopted by Council, six policies have been revoked as they are no longer required and four new policies have been developed. The Administrators are leaving Council with a contemporary suite of policies in place, ready for the new Council.

The *Councillor Transition Program* has been developed, ready for implementation, in line with South Gippsland Shire Council's election to be held in October 2021. The Program aims to set the new Council up for success. Creation of various training material have been developed, with the focus of also using online capabilities to ensure Council is able to target different communication methods for the Program to be effective. Training and education has also been implemented throughout the organisation and will continue up until election period.

Good Governance Framework

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

Council continues to follow the 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 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







Port Welshpool

Good Governance Framework Action 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. The following 60 action items demonstrate the actions since the regular reporting of the *Administrator Community Update* reports were endorsed in December 2019.



Progress Status Definition	Number
 COMPLETE Action item has achieved target and is completed. No further action is required.	54
 ON TRACK The progress performance for the action item is achieving target. All elements of the action item is on track.	6
 MONITOR 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.	-
 ON HOLD Action item has been placed on-hold due to a set of circumstances or changes in legislation.	-
NEW Action item that has been added to this latest report under the relevant <i>Good Governance Framework Pillar</i>	



Wilson's Promontory

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

COMPLETE

1

Community Leadership Program

The first intake of the Community Leadership Program had 18 participants which was endorsed by Council at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting. The Program was launched on 28 October 2020 in which the participants attended nine sessions that covered a range of topics; Emotional Intelligence, Strategic Leadership, Culture and Diversity, Local Government 101, Collaboration and Networking, Public Speaking, Teamwork, Values and Governance. The first intake of the Program concluded on 17 March 2021.

Council undertook a review and evaluation of the first intake of the Program and determined:

- That all candidates are assessed against the criteria for the Program;
- That the Chief Executive Officer can be delegated to backfill from the next highest on the endorsed waiting list of applicants, if a participant withdraws within four weeks;
- A member of the Executive Leadership Team or their delegate to participate on the Assessment Panel, establishing an Assessment Panel of four, including an independent member.

Council launched the expression-of-interest for the second intake of the Program in May 2021. A total of 20 participants were appointed to the Program at the 23 June 2021 Council Meeting, with a start date in July 2021. The Program will continue to be evaluated and implemented through to the next Council.

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 later in 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 2021 to 28 May 2021.

The *Council Plan 2020-2024* was endorsed by Council at the 24 June 2020 Council Meeting. Second year Annual Initiatives for 2021/22 were adopted by Council on 23 June 2021.

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

3	Capital Works Program – Priority Projects July 2020	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>At the 22 July 2020 Council Meeting, Council endorsed the following 2020/21 Priority Projects for advocacy 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>
4	Long Term Financial Strategies	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Review completed November 2019.</p>
5	Community Vision	<p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>Council has developed a draft framework for the South Gippsland <i>Community Vision 2040</i>. Further planning is underway to support the new Council to develop their Vision, in partnership with the community.</p>
6	Appointment of Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer of South Gippsland Shire Council was appointed on 5 February 2020.</p>
7	Attendance at One Gippsland (formerly Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN))	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Chair Administrator and Chief Executive Officer representing South Gippsland at One Gippsland meetings. There has been 100 per cent attendance at these monthly meetings by either the Chair Administrator or Council's Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) from July 2020 to July 2021.</p>

Meeniyan

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

8	2021/22 Annual Initiatives of the Council Plan 2020-2024	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>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 <i>Council Plan 2020-2024</i>.</p> <p>These initiatives were adopted with the 2021/22 Annual Budget at the 23 June 2021 Council Meeting.</p>
9	Establish a Corporate Forward Plan for the organisation	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>A Forward Planner has been developed by the Executive Leadership Team and Council to establish key corporate milestones over the next twelve months. The revised process has been in place for six-months and is working effectively within the organisation.</p> <p>The Planner identifies annual initiatives, policy and strategy reviews, legislative requirements and future reporting and will provide a governance and overarching approach to corporate planning for the next elected Council.</p>
10	Road Management - Strategic Road Projects for Advocacy	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route – Stage Two; • 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.
11	Planning Scheme - Environmental Audit Overlay	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>The Planning department conducted an Environmental Audit Overlay which aims to identify potentially contaminated land requiring further investigation before sensitive land uses can occur.</p> <p>This helps to protect the environment, human health and improve livability within the Shire. This Planning Scheme Amendment was adopted at the 25 November 2020 Council Meeting and advertised for a six week period.</p>

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

COMPLETE

12

Administrator Self-Assessment

The Administrators commenced trialling a self-assessment process for Administrators/Councillors. The externally facilitated pilot program was conducted in December 2020 and aimed to identify improvement opportunities on an ongoing basis.

In addition to this review, Council adopted the *Councillor Self-Assessment Policy (C84)* and related *Councillor Self-Assessment Procedures* and a *Good Governance Survey* at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting.

Together these documents will support Councillors to continuously grow and develop as a team and individuals. This approach provides good governance by annually assessing how well Councillors are working together, how effective they have been and will also help to identify potential gaps and opportunities.

COMPLETE

13
NEW

Review the organisational structure and framework of Council Meetings and briefings to Council

As part of the good governance reforms required by the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South Gippsland Shire Council 20219*, a new approach to Council reporting has progressed and has been implemented as at March 2021.

This new approach has created changes such as:

- Council Meeting Days moved from fourth week to the third week of the month;
- Council Meeting time changed from 2.00pm to 1.00pm to allow time frame to be closer to 'lunchtime' for ease of community attendance;
- Introduction of Council 'Community Days' provide a dedicated and regular scheduling program on the fourth week of the month for community members to meet with Council, in various locations across the Shire;
- Advisory Groups established for 'Economic Development', 'Visitor Economy' and 'Community Infrastructure' have provided valuable guidance in the formation of strategic plans and decisions of Council.;
- Dedicated time frames on the first day of the month, for submitters to speak to specific planning or other formal engagement matters;
- Time efficiency for Councillors whereby distributing once to Councillors, their documentation for the next month, compared to distributing on a weekly cycle; providing the opportunity to read 'Council Papers' further in advance;
- Streamlined efficiencies for internal reporting where by all 'Council Papers' are peer reviewed monthly with less 'touch points' compared to a previous weekly review cycle and improved quality of reports.

Pillar One - Direction and Leadership

COMPLETE

At the 21 July 2021 Council Meeting, Council endorsed the following 2021/221 Priority Projects for advocacy to the State and Federal Governments for funding:

- Korumburra Streetscape (Commercial Street) Project;
- Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) Railway Precinct Development (Leongatha to Korumburra);
- South Gippsland Highway, Korumburra Realignment (Coal Creek Bends);
- Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route - Stage Two (Hughes Street)
- Wilson Promontory Revitalisation Project;
- South Gippsland Urban Water Strategy;
- Bass Highway - Leongatha to Anderson;
- South Gippsland Highway - Grassy Spur Realignment;
- Strzelecki Highway - Crightons Hill Realignment; and
- The Gippsland Tracks and Trails Project

14 Advocating for Priority
NEW Projects - July 2021

Pillar Two - Culture and Behaviour

1	Councillor Code of Conduct review	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>As per the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the <i>Councillor Code of Conduct Policy</i> is due after South Gippsland Shire Council Election in October 2021. The Policy review was to align with the 2020 Act, and the <i>Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020</i>. The Code contains new principles and commitments that seek to support the new Councillors to be a successful team. This early review was a specific requirement of the Administrators appointment.</p> <p>The <i>Councillor Code of Conduct Policy (C14)</i> was adopted at the 18 August 2021 Council Meeting.</p>
2	Council to develop shared values for the community and the organisation	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>New values for the Council and community have been adopted in the <i>2020-2024 Council Plan</i>. 'Customer Focused', 'Accountable', 'Respectful', 'Acting in the interests of the whole Shire' and 'Pursuing excellence in everything we do', are the values of the organisation.</p>
3	Review of the Customer Service Charter	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>The <i>Customer Service Charter</i> has been reviewed and adopted by Council at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting. The Charter has been established to ensure high standards of customer service and responsiveness are maintained, and to provide clarity to both customers and Council employees about the standards of service that is to be provided.</p>
4	Review of the Health and Wellbeing Program	<p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>An extensive review of Council's <i>Health and Wellbeing Program</i> has been conducted to formalise the Program around a proven Health and Wellbeing framework promoted by the <i>Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)</i> for workplaces. This is being implemented within the organisation to support staff in health and wellbeing.</p> <p>It was on schedule for the <i>Municipal Public Healthy and Wellbeing Plan - Healthy Community Plan 2021/22</i> to be presented to Council at the 15 September 2021 Council Meeting. This is an interim one-year plan, to cover the intervening gap to meet legislated requirements for a four year Plan. The in-coming Council will have the opportunity to review and provide input into the four-year <i>Healthy Communities Plan 2020-2025</i>, in the new term of Council.</p>
5 NEW	Adopted a revised <i>Human Rights Policy</i>	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>The <i>Human Rights Policy (C52)</i> was reviewed in line with the <i>Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> and was adopted by Council at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting.</p>
6 NEW	Policy template revision	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council has conducted an internal review of Council's Policy template and updated statements to include reference to the <i>Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> and the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>.</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)	COMPLETE C65 - was reviewed and revoked as part of the suite of Council policies. During the review, it was determined that the Policy was duplicated or superseded through the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , the <i>Governance Rules (C82)</i> and the Local Law. The streamlined changes in organisational approaches to the Policy Review Framework and structure of Council meetings, along with the dedicated 'Community Days' with Council, will adequately manage meeting requirements and interactions with Council and/or Chief Executive Officer and members of the public.
4	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 (C82)</i> . A formal public submission process was held for the month of October 2020 in accordance with legislative requirements.
5	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.
6	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 the yearly schedule was adopted by Council at the 16 December 2020 Council Meeting.

Pillar Three - Decision Making

7	Review of Conflict of Interest as per the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Reviewed and updated reporting of how Council staff report conflict of interests as per the revised guidelines in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> which came into effect on 24 October 2020.</p>
8	Establish Terms of Reference and membership of Council's Economic Development and Visitor Attraction Advisory Groups	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council appointed 14 independent members (seven members to each Committee) and endorsed the Terms of Reference for each Committee at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting.</p>
9	Establish Terms of Reference and membership of Council's Community Infrastructure Advisory Committee	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>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 was advertised and five members were appointed at the 17 March 2021 Council Meeting.</p>
10 NEW	2021/22 Annual Budget and a 10-year Financial Plan	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council adopted the 2021/22 Annual Budget and the 10-year (2021/22 - 2030/31) Financial Plan at the 23 June 2021 Council Meeting.</p> <p>Community consultation was held between 15 April 2021 to 17 May 2021 in line with Council's <i>Community Engagement Policy</i> and community engagement principles. The 25 submissions received during this process, contributed to the outcome of the Budget.</p>
11 NEW	Endorse an Economic Development Strategy and a Visitor Economy Strategy	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council's established <i>Economic Development Strategy Advisory Group</i> and the <i>Visitor Economy Strategy Advisory Group</i> (seven members on each Committee) met four times during the financial year, including one joint meeting.</p> <p>At these meetings, the members provided expertise, advice and comment on the Draft <i>Economy Development 2021-2031 Strategy</i> and the <i>Visitor Economy 2021-2031 Strategy</i>. In addition to the Committee feedback, a range of consultation activities took place from 2019 to May 2021 to obtain the final outcome of the two Strategies. The consultation included, submissions, press releases, meetings with South Gippsland chambers and business associations, consultation via an online platform and one-on-one and group sessions.</p> <p>The Proposed Drafts of these two Strategies were adopted at the 23 June 2021 Council Meeting and placed on an additional two-week public exhibition process. The final endorsed Strategies were adopted at the 21 July 2021 Council Meeting and are available on Council's website.</p> <p>The two Advisory Groups will continue during 2021/22 to oversee the implementation of the two Strategies.</p>

Strzelecki

Pillar Four - Structure, Systems and Policies

1	South Gippsland Shire Council <i>Good Governance Framework</i>	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Reporting against South Gippsland's <i>Good Governance Framework</i> 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 • 24 February 2021 Council Meeting.
2	Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy (C51)	<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 <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> timelines.</p>
3	Sound Recording of Council Meetings Policy (C48)	<p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>C48 -has been reviewed ready to be incorporated into a combined revised <i>Live-Streaming of Council Meetings Policy</i>. This is part of a wider policy reform program. A date to bring this to Council has not yet been finalised.</p>
4	Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy (C67)	<p style="text-align: right;">ON TRACK</p> <p>C67 - is to be incorporated into a combined revised <i>Live-Streaming of Council Meetings Policy</i> with the <i>Sound Recordings of Council Meetings Policy</i> (C51). This is part of a wider policy reform program. A date to bring this to Council has not yet been finalised.</p>

Pillar Four - Structure, Systems and Policies

COMPLETE

5 Governance policies (C82) adopted by Council

Council undertook a review of corporate reporting and time lines against the *Local Government Act 2020* to ensure Council is compliant with legislative time frames. As per Phase One of this project and the 2020 Act, a number of governance policies were endorsed before the deadline of 1 September 2020. These policies were developed or reviewed, and community consultation was conducted where required. These included:

- Governance Rules
- Public Transparency Policy
- Council Election Period Policy
- Councillor Support and Expenditure Policy

The *Local Law No.2 2020 - Meeting Procedures and Common Seal* was revised and adopted at the 25 November 2020 Council Meeting.

As part of Phase Two of this project, a *Councillor Gift Policy* was required to be separated from a *Staff Gift Policy* as per section 138 of the 2020 Act. Council's *Councillor Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy* had a major review and was adopted at the 21 April 2021 Council Meeting.

Work continues to review and adopt or revoke various governance policies to ensure the suite of good governance policies are addressing gaps in the *Good Governance Framework*, or meeting future legislative requirements. Council will continue to refine and adopt some, or all, of these prior to the Council election in October 2021 to ensure the suite of governance policies are meeting current requirements and are in line with contemporary practice.

COMPLETE

6 Adopt a new
NEW *Capital Works Policy*

Council adopted a new *Capital Works Policy (C85)* at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting. The *Community Infrastructure Advisory Group* reviewed and endorsed the Policy before it was presented to Council.

COMPLETE

7 Adopt a revised
NEW *Leasing Policy*

Council adopted a revised *Leasing Policy (C85)* at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting to be in line with the changes in legislation as per the *Local Government Act 2020*.

COMPLETE

8 Adopt a set of Financial
NEW Management Policies to comply with legislation

The following Financial Management Policies were adopted at the 18 August 2021 Council Meeting to ensure Council complies with legislation in the *Local Government Act 2020* and continues to maintain best practice in managing Council's financial assets.

- Financial Management Policy (C86) - new policy
- Revenue and Debt Collection Policy (C15)
- Treasury Management Policy (C24)

COMPLETE

9 Review of the Asset
NEW Management Policy

C04 - has been reviewed and adopted by Council at the 18 August 2021 Council Meeting. This Policy provides the overarching framework and principles to enable Council to deliver effective management of roads, assets, buildings, parks, gardens and reserves.



Venus Bay

Pillar Five - Communication and Community Engagement

COMPLETE

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 web-forms to allow better opportunities for community members to access Council services through the website.
- Refining the use of social media advertising.
- Distribution of community updates to 1,763 'In the Know' subscribers.
- 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.

COMPLETE

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 *Community Engagement Policy* was adopted by Council at the 24 February 2021 Council Meeting and met the legislated time frame 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 *Local Government Act 2020*.

Pillar Five - Communication and Community Engagement

4	<i>Community Engagement Strategy</i> adopted	The <i>Community Engagement Strategy</i> has been reviewed and adopted at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting.	COMPLETE
5	Review of Council's website	A number of structural changes on the website have been completed to improve navigation of the site for Council's customers. Council has moved to the process of creating dynamic forms being available on Council's website to further improve and streamline processes for community members to interact with Council online. This work has been expedited to provide better online services for community members, during the COVID-19 Pandemic and will continue to progress further on an ongoing basis. Council's website development will continue into the newly elected Council.	COMPLETE
6 NEW	Live Streaming of Council Meetings capability improved	Live Streaming technology behind the scenes has been upgraded in order to improve the quality of live streaming and the presentation of Council Meetings. This has been particularly important during the requirements of virtual meetings due to restrictions of the COVID-19 Pandemic.	COMPLETE



Tidal River

Pillar Six - Capability

ON TRACK

1 Councillor Transition Program

Candidate and Councillor (once elected) training is mandatory as per the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council has worked closely with the *Victorian Election Commission* (VEC) to ensure that candidate nominations and Council Election requirements are met.

Caretaker period for Council will commence on 21 September, and end on the election date of 23 October 2021. Council is also providing a range of candidate information and advice, in partnership with the *Victorian Local Government Association* (VLGA) and VEC.

A comprehensive *Councillor Transition Program* is in development. This will both meet all the statutory requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as well as setting the Councillors up to work successfully as a team in the interests of the community as a whole.

COMPLETE

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 services to the community. As restrictions have eased and been reinstated throughout the past two years, Council has reopened and closed 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 Six - Capability

ON TRACK

3
NEW

Digital Strategy - basic community self-service capability available to the public

Execution of Council's *Information Technology Strategy* has progressed despite the recent operating environment and constraints experienced due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The technology that operates Council's website has been updated. Work is now underway to develop more online capabilities and opportunities to interact with Council digitally.

Technology enhancements are in progress in relation to updating staff's technology and systems to improve the way in which Council's services are provided.

Focus will now move to modernisation and simplification of the technology solutions within Council and adoption of recommendations from the recently completed Service Review.

COMPLETE

4
NEW

Customer Service requests and complaint handling management

Customer service systems and processes are being considered as part of the Customer First Project (C1 Project). The C1 Project is designed to be a whole-of-organisation program approach that aims to improve the way that Council Officers provide services to the community and aims to address known customer service issues.

The monitoring of customer service performance at Council's first point of contact with the community, *Customer Satisfaction Survey* data and consultation with the *Customer First Project Reference Group*, has allowed the C1 Project to focus on key aspects, that include:

- Universal mandatory customer service training.
- Revised and improved Customer Service Charter that includes service-based delivery commitments.
- Systems improvements to make it easier for customers to deal with Council.
- Process alignments to ensure that customer requests are all dealt with in the same way across the organisation and are not missed.
- Updates to Council's internal *Complaints Handling Policy* and improved processes to ensure that complaints are managed appropriately.
- Ongoing customer service data measurement and reporting.
- The need to embed C1 principles into recruitment and performance management processes.

Pillar Seven - Risk and Compliance

1	Report by 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 and 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. The annual review of the Policy was also updated and adopted on 21 July 2021.</p> <p>This Policy was reviewed and updated to align to the requirements and changes outlined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>. The 2020 Act stipulates that a compliance Procurement Policy must be established by each Council from 1 July 2021 and implemented no later than 31 December 2021.</p> <p>This review was also updated to incorporate process improvements and efficiencies sought by the internal <i>Procurement Working Group</i> and <i>Maturing Contracting Strategy</i>. This Policy will move from an annual review cycle to a four-year cycle as per the 2020 Act.</p>
4	Audit and 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 <i>Audit and Risk Committee</i> 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 and 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 <i>Audit and Risk Committee</i> at the 26 August 2020 Council Meeting.</p>
5 NEW	A Service Review Framework and timetable developed	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>Council's Management team have finalised the <i>Service Review Framework</i> and approach. Service Reviews have been completed for the Planning, People and Culture and Information Technology departments. Implementation of recommendations have either been implemented or are in progress. A number of other key services within the organisation will be reviewed to identify efficiencies and streamline approaches.</p>
6 NEW	Conduct a Risk and Compliance Workshop with Council	<p style="text-align: right;">COMPLETE</p> <p>A Risk and Compliance workshop was held on the 19 May 2021 with Council. The purpose of this workshop was to identify strategic risks for South Gippsland Shire Council and the in-coming Council. It assisted in updated Council's strategic risk register as well as the completion of control identification and final assessment of risk, to ensure compliance.</p>

Pillar Eight - Monitoring and Performance Review

COMPLETE

1 Audit of the Capital Works planning and scheduling program

Internal Audit review completed and recommendations adopted at the *Audit and Risk Committee* in December 2020. As part of this review Council endorsed a new *Capital Works Policy (C85)* at the 19 May 2021 Council Meeting and is being carried out in conjunction with the development of the Project Management Framework and *Community and Economic Infrastructure Blueprint* review.

COMPLETE

2 2019/20 Quarterly financial and performance reporting

The *Council Plan 2020-2024* and the *2020/21 Annual Initiatives* are reported quarterly in Council's Organisational Performance Reports as follow:

First Report: 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020

- Council Meeting - 25 November 2020
- Audit and Risk Committee - 8 December 2020

Second Report: 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020

- Council Meeting - 24 February 2021
- Audit and Risk Committee - 9 March 2021

Third Report: 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021

- Council Meeting - 19 May 2021
- Audit and Risk Committee - 8 June 2021

Year to date 2020/21 Financial Performance Reports were adopted by Council at the October 2020, March 2021, May 2021 and Council Meeting.

COMPLETE

3 Integrated planning, monitoring and reporting framework (LGPRF)

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. The 2020/21 audit is currently nearing completion.

COMPLETE

4
NEW Endorse a strategy review of the *Community and Economic Infrastructure Blueprint*

A *Community and Economic Infrastructure Blueprint 2021-2036* was adopted by Council at the 18 August 2021 Council Meeting. This Blueprint establishes objectives, guiding principles, and nominates infrastructure standards and outlines upgrades, expansions, and new infrastructure projects. It is a guiding document that will guide Council and the community over a 15-year period from 2021 to 2036.

The Blueprint also enshrines a process whereby community members can submit requests for infrastructure and be assured there is a planned and transparent approach to infrastructure and asset management by Council.

CHAIR
ADMINISTRATOR



JULIE EISENBISE

DEPUTY CHAIR
ADMINISTRATOR



CHRISTIAN ZAHRA

ADMINISTRATOR



RICK BROWN

CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER
KERRY N ELLIS





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