

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Acting Minister for Local Government
Acting Minister for Suburban Development



Tuesday, 7 September 2021

MONITOR TO GUIDE SOUTH GIPPSLAND'S NEW COUNCIL

Local government elections will be held next month to elect a council for South Gippsland Shire, following more than two years under administration.

Acting Minister for Local Government Mary-Anne Thomas today announced a municipal monitor will be appointed to the Council following the election in late October, to support good governance and democracy during the Council's first year.

The monitor will support the Shire's transition back to elected representation and assist councillors to take ownership of a positive and inclusive culture that will improve systems and build public trust.

Following the council's dismissal in June 2019, South Gippsland Shire Administrators Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra and Rick Brown have been overseeing the council and working with the community to restore confidence.

In addition to appointing a monitor, the Victorian Government has supported the participation of women in local democracy in South Gippsland with three grants, including \$50,000 to help the council develop an extensive community leadership development program.

A grant of \$29,500 was provided to the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) to continue and expand its mentoring program, pairing newly-elected female councillors with experienced mentors from across the state. Five places in this program are reserved for women elected to the South Gippsland Shire Council.

A grant of \$7,500 went to the Victorian Local Governance Association's (VLGA) *Local Women Leading Change Program* to support women candidates in the Shire elections.

With candidate nominations opening on 16 September, eligible candidates are encouraged to stand for election to represent their communities.

Elections will be held on October 23 and the Victorian Electoral Commission expects results to be declared by November 5. A Mayor will be elected by the councillors after the new council is sworn in.

All candidates must complete the Local Government Candidate Training Course before they nominate – localgovernment.vic.gov.au/council-governance/candidate-training.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Local Government Mary-Anne Thomas

"The municipal monitor will support the return of elected representation at South Gippsland Shire – I expect the next council will continue the good governance that the Administrators have put in place and the community deserves."

"Serving on council is an opportunity to represent your community and deliver changes that can make a real difference, so I'd encourage anyone in South Gippsland interested to nominate."