



COUNCIL MATTERS DIGEST

15th October 2021

One week to go!



Healthy Activity Among Ratepayers at Shire Council Elections

“**South Gippsland District.** Municipal matters are receiving more attention than usual, and the healthy activity among the ratepayers at the shire council elections is a good indication of prosperity, as it shows the farmers are diverting attention to public business. Stock have wintered well, and the outlook is promising, especially in dairying. The largely increased areas of grass have given an increase this year both in produce and fat stock. Another good indication is the price of land...” THE LEADER, Saturday 19th August 1899

‘Nothing’s different, but everything has changed.’ *Charles De Lint*

Making recent news in this edition - Friday 15th October 2021

You can click on the underlined titles to get the full story or letter.

How much will 'climate change emergency' cost us?

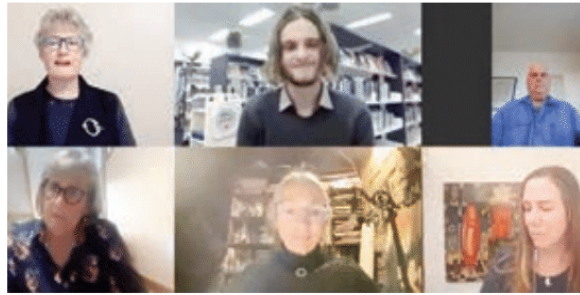
BEEF and sheep farmer from Foster North, Scott Rae said what a lot of people might be thinking about the campaign, wrapped around the South Gippsland Shire Council election, to get the new council to declare a climate change emergency.

He was speaking at the first of three candidate forums last week organised by various community groups including the Venus Bay Community Centre, Leongatha Business Association, Korumburra Round Table and Mirboo Country Development.

Referencing his remarks about wanting to head off the sort of anti-farm bylaws he'd seen introduced in other areas, he admitted the climate emergency mantra grated.

"There seems to be a big focus amongst the candidates in the Coastal Prom Ward on the environment. Some of the goals presented to me are very impressive. Now I'm never-say-never kind of guy, but I'm a bit at odds with the perceived given that we must declare a climate emergency.

"At what financial cost will this come to the ratepayers. Will this feel-good, woke, virtual-single action actually give ratepayers



Among the Coastal Promontory candidates who spoke at the online forum are, clockwise from left, Sue Plowright, Mat Morgan, Scott Rae, Sarah Gilligan, Anda Banikos and Moyha Davies. David Leibelt not pictured.

any benefits, apart from seeing Facebook likes, or just get a bill."

Mr Rae went on to say that as the custodian of a sizeable piece of land he was aware that landholders can do better for the environment but as for declaring a climate change emergency, he wasn't convinced.

It was just one of hundreds of views expressed by the 24 candidates over the three days: Tuesday Coastal Promontory, Wednesday Strzelecki and Thursday Tarwin Valley with the so-called 'Kamikaze Korner' in Leongatha, actually the responsibility of Regional Roads Victoria,

among the other issues heavily canvassed.

At the Strzelecki Ward night, facilitator Colin Pidd asked former councillor Andrew McEwen what went wrong with the last council.

Frank Hirst offered the view that the problems might have originated out of favours offered at the first mayoral election.

He proposed a pope-style election process where new councillors are sequestered in a room until they select the new mayor, allowing no pre-lobbying or offers of future favours.

At the Tarwin Valley Ward forum,

33-year-old Adrian Darakai launched a Martin Luther-King style speech, substituting the words "I see a better way forward" for "I have a dream" but you get the idea.

"I see a better way forward in arts and culture, that brings people out and together.

"I see a better way forward for business, where we nurture and build the businesses of tomorrow.

"I see a better way forward for preserving our natural beauty, making sure people in the future are able to enjoy what we see today.

"I see a better way forward for roads. I see a better way forward for our sporting facilities.

"And I see a better way forward for this council."

He can speak but can he represent. That's for the voters to decide.

Voting packs are arriving on kitchen tables all around the shire this week and much of the voting will be completed by this Friday, ahead of the official closing day for votes on Friday, October 22.

Extended stories about the forums are available online at <https://sgst.com.au/> or you can hear them streamed on YouTube.

Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

[Voting closes soon for the South Gippsland Shire Council election](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

VOTERS enrolled in the South Gippsland Shire Council election are reminded they have until 6pm on Friday, October 22, to return their completed ballot material.

[Tricky election deserves some thought](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

CANDIDATES, and elected councillors for that matter, make the mistake of thinking that most people give a toss. They don't.' They've been conditioned by council behaviour and lack of genuine engagement to feel that way. *(more available)*

Letters to the Editor

[Apology to Tony Walker \(5/10\) Sentinel-Times](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

Thank you Tony for drawing my attention to the fact that JTSG are not actually fielding candidates in the South Gippsland Shire Council elections. I should have done due diligence in checking with all 24 candidates whether they were aligned with JTSG before making the allegation. It is disappointing that my sources of information are not always reliable. This is becoming increasingly common in this postmodern age. Nonetheless, I stand by the premise that AGW is not scientifically validated, as explained more fully in Michael Shellenberger's well-documented "Apocalypse Never" book. Hence we all should take great care that what we act on is based on real science and factual information, even to the point of being willing to admit we were wrong.

Otto Ippel, Koorooman

[Voices from the past and a voice for the future](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

Our community is calling for greater trust in and genuine engagement with our new council. Some specific suggestions are:

The reintroduction of open council meetings.

Holding council meetings in different towns throughout the shire, not always in Leongatha.

Setting up advisory citizens assemblies drawn from all walks of life, including youth and the disadvantaged.

A hurdle to overcome is to engage people who have traditionally not had a seat at the decision-making table.

Two areas of particular concern are the experienced voices of our First Nations people and the fresh views of youth. *(more available)*

Anda Banikos, Candidate for Coastal Promontory Ward - Fish Creek

[A fresh start is needed](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

I was interested to read the answers provided by the Strzelecki Ward candidates to the five questions asked by the Sentinel-Times, September 28.

I note that one of Frank Hirst's 'top 5 issues' will be revisiting the administrators' decision on the location of the Korumburra Community Hub. I also saw with interest that Don Hill, a Tarwin Valley candidate also has a review for the Korumburra Hub location on his three-month to-do list if elected. Considering the Hub has been through an extensive public consultation process, an extensive planning process, the contract has been awarded and the contractors are on site, not to mention that it fits well with the 2013 Korumburra Town Centre Framework Plan and the main stake-holders have been involved in the planning and decisions, this can only be considered as an absolute waste of ratepayers' money.

It's time to look forward, not look back.

We have some great candidates with some fabulous skills and expertise, who have put their hands up to represent us. Let's have a fresh start and get on with it.

Noelene Cosson, Korumburra

[Looking for a diverse new council](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

I write this open letter to our community with slight trepidation yet, with great hope that this upcoming council election will bring a well-needed change and re-set to this wonderful place we call home – South Gippsland, whichever ward you live in. *(more available)*

Helen Ritt, Fish Creek

[A refocus is needed](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

In your recent edition of Letters to the Editor, I was shocked to see so many contributors banging on about ensuring councillors standing for election declaring a “climate emergency”. Have people lost their sense of reality in Gippsland? I’m certainly not a climate change denier (having witnessed first hand whilst hiking in Greenland glaciers melting rapidly), but what I’m gob-smacked about is how ultra-naive people seem to be. *(more available)*

Tony Griggs, Hallston

[Council must get on with action on climate change](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

On the excellently-organised council election candidates’ forums run across all shire wards last week, it was disappointing to see how little attention some candidates pay to the wishes of their community when it comes to climate change action. Numerous candidates said they’d seen no evidence of support for our next council to declare a climate emergency and develop a climate action plan. *(more available)*

Tony Walker, Fish Creek

[Time to shelve how to vote cards](#) Sentinel-Times 12/10/21

Jockeys shouldn’t be placing bets on their own races, right? So why on earth do we let candidates decide our votes for us? How to vote cards are nasty, undemocratic, and should be shelved. *(more available)*

Gen Anderson, Leongatha

[Schelling more interested in voters’ ‘grading’](#)

Through this newspaper I would like to correct some misconceptions of my character being placed in another locally produced newspaper, that is dropped off free of charge in many mailboxes in the Tarwin Valley Ward district of the South Gippsland Shire with the editor listed as Barbara Hill. *(more available)*

John Schelling, Leongatha. Candidate for Tarwin Valley Ward.

[Focus on local issues](#)

South Gippsland Shire Council should be focusing on local community needs first. When you vote this week, vote for the candidates that put local issues first. Local childcare services; community services, roads and recreation to start the discussion. For too long our Council has ignored the Coastal Promontory Ward. This ward is a cash cow that has been exploited for too long. You will find that our small communities are screaming out for simple community enhancements and projects that can make a world of difference to their lives. *(more available)*

David Liebelt, Candidate for the Coastal Promontory Ward

A reminder, if you have any insightful articles, editorials, letters, social media posts that have been missed, please send them to [Council Matters](#) for inclusion in the next Digest. We will circulate the Digest weekly for the moment.

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SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021 ELECTION TIMELINE

Council primary enrolment data	JUL 12	MON	(Date fixed by VEC)
Public notice of Close of Roll Date (Published during this period)	AUG 7	SAT	
	AUG 13	FRI	
Close of Roll	AUG 27	FRI	4.00 pm (57 days before Election Day)
Publication of Election Notice (Published during this period)	AUG 30	MON	
	SEP 4	SAT	
Opening of election office	SEP 15	WED	
Certification of voters' roll	SEP 16	THU	
Opening of nominations	SEP 16	THU	
Nomination Day	SEP 21	TUE	Nominations close at 12 noon Ballot draw to follow
Lodgement of candidate statements, photographs and questionnaires	SEP 22	WED	Candidate statements, photos and questionnaires close at 12 noon
	SEP 24	FRI	
Mail-out of ballot packs/ Uncontested ward leaflets	OCT 5	TUE	
	OCT 6	WED	
	OCT 7	THU	
CLOSE OF VOTING	OCT 22	FRI	Voting closes at 6.00 pm
Election Day	OCT 23	SAT	
Postal vote receipt period	OCT 25	MON	
	OCT 29	FRI	Postal vote receipt closes at 12 noon
	NOV 2	TUE	Melbourne Cup Day Public Holiday

All elections to be declared by Friday 5 November.

*AFL Grand Final public holiday – TBD

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