

Talking Business

December 2019

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Paul's Corner

December has once again arrived, and with it the need to celebrate the many milestones achieved during 2019. Holding festive functions can be a necessary but costly affair, so be sure to check if you are eligible for the Australian Taxation Office's fringe benefits tax to help cushion those costs – see page 3 for details.

We could not be happier with the developments that have taken place in our city and across our diverse businesses this year, many of which have been reported in this magazine.

In this edition, we encourage residents and businesses to support the local economy by shopping in Greater Dandenong during the Christmas season, especially given the many and varied options available for unique gifts.

The social enterprises sector continues to gain traction across Victoria and Council is keen to foster local growth – so we invite social enterprises to make contact with the Economic Development Unit to receive support and become a part of a community of likeminded individuals. We also encourage local businesses to take on a student to play their part in creating a future-proof Greater Dandenong workforce.

A number of other educational pieces are included, such as information on the ban of single-use plastic bags, steps to starting a foodie business, an update on the Better Approvals Project and the key takeaways from the annual real estate and development forum. From all of us here at Greater Dandenong Business, I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. We will see you again in March when we explore the happenings of the first quarter of 2020.

Paul Kearsley
Director Business, Engineering
and Major Projects

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Annual real estate and development forum explores sector trends

Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU) held its annual Real Estate and Development Forum on September 18, which was attended by more than seventy people across the building, industrial, commercial and residential real estate sectors.

Running for more than ten years, the 2019 speakers explored a range of topics including the status of retail locally and internationally, affordable housing and the value of regional thinking for investment opportunities.

City of Greater Dandenong's Chief Executive Officer, John Bennie, kicked off the session by providing an overview of the local economy, outlining Council's 2019-20 key initiatives. He also highlighted the importance of regional collaboration and the current advocacy work being undertaken by the South East Melbourne organisation.

Retail expert, Stuart Harker of *Harker Advisory*, spoke about current retail trends and their implications for businesses.

"Retailers are competing in an ecosystem that is challenging as customers want value but store experiences too. The challenge for retail precincts is to meet consumers high expectations," said Mr Harker.

The audience also heard from Brian Haratsis, Executive Chairman from MacroPlan and Karen Janiszewski, Director from Urbanxchange. Brian focused on



Pictured left to right: Stuart Harker, Yogeeta Silva, Karen Janiszewski, John Bennie and Brian Haratsis.

"Retailers are competing in an ecosystem that is challenging as customers want value but store experiences too. The challenge for retail precincts is to meet consumers high expectations"

the South East region and the importance of thinking regionally. He suggested Dandenong could strategically leverage the proposed South East airport, as well as positioning itself as a health hub. Karen identified the key areas for social and affordable housing.

Yogeeta Silva, Senior Development Manager at Development Victoria, provided an overview of the current focus of Development Victoria including the Expression of Interest for the Revitalising Central Dandenong's Little India.

Stay connected in a dynamic and ever-changing industry

Council recognises the importance of keeping abreast of the latest industry trends and the value of sharing information among peers. For this reason, the EDU will be facilitating a new network that will meet quarterly with presenters sharing up-to-date information on issues and topics that could affect businesses in the real estate and development industry.

For further information and to register your interest please contact business@cgd.vic.gov.au.

Fringe benefits tax may cushion cost of festive functions

The end of year is upon us and it is always a busy time for small businesses.

Rewarding your employees with gifts or parties is quite common during the festive season. Many businesses are unaware that fringe benefits tax may apply depending on how much you spend, when and where you celebrate, and who is invited.

You can read more at ato.gov.au/FBTFestiveseason.

The *Australian Taxation Office (ATO)* understands this season can include challenges with cash flow, and it can really take a toll on individual wellbeing too. The organisation is here to help and can provide a range of support for small businesses visit ato.gov.au/sbsupport.



Profit for purpose: Council seeks to support social enterprises

'City of Greater Dandenong encourages any local social enterprises to contact its Economic Development team for support and to build connections with other likeminded individuals'

The growth of social enterprises across Australia signifies a shift towards profit for purpose. These businesses exist to generate revenue that can then create social impact.

Contributing more than \$5 billion to Victoria's economy, there are about 4,000 social enterprises across the state according to the Map for Impact – a State Government commissioned study to identify and map Victoria's social enterprises and their social and economic characteristics.

This year, Thomson Reuters Foundation ranked Australia:

- the second best country (behind Canada) to be a social entrepreneur overall;
- the best for being able to make a living from that work; and
- third best for ease in accessing investment.

Council recognises the ever-growing importance and contribution of this sector and will be increasingly focused on engaging with social enterprises to tell their stories, provide networking, training, mentoring, case studies, and other opportunities and resources.

In August 2019, The Social Enterprise Network of Victoria (SENVIC) officially launched at the Social Traders conference. SENVIC aims to build a connected community of social enterprises and so far members have identified a need for increased awareness and access to funding and grant opportunities.

A local case study: empowering job seekers while helping those in need

Elena Sheldon, Manager at Springvale Learning and Activities Centre Inc., says the 74-year-old organisation established its social enterprise late last year.

CoCO's Community Creating Opportunities in Dandenong provides emergency relief, food and material aid for those in need. It's also an organisation where participants can develop their work skills.

"CoCO's is a cool, vintage-style shop," says Ms Sheldon. "Volunteers, such as migrants, asylum seekers or parents returning to work come to us to brush up on their work skills. We have a high percentage of job-seeking volunteers gaining employment elsewhere after four to six weeks with us."

The social enterprise successfully applied for the State Government's Boost Your Business Voucher Program in 2018 with Council's support, which provides up to \$25,000 under the Social Enterprise Capability Stream.

"This is to improve operations and financial modelling, which we completed in February 2019," Ms Sheldon reports.

"Social Ventures Australia was our consultant and since then we've been successful with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust funding us to build on this initial work."

Contact Council to learn more

Greater Dandenong Council encourages any local social enterprises to contact its Economic Development team for support and to build connections with other likeminded individuals. It is also important for Council to be aware of the challenges local social enterprises face so they can provide tailored support. We would also love to tell your story in this magazine.

Social Enterprise Seminar

Simon Griffiths, Founder and CEO of *Who Gives a Crap* is hosting an upcoming seminar.

Come along and hear about Simon's successes, challenges and learnings from his widespread and impactful philanthropic work and apply them to your own social enterprise.

Who Gives a Crap is a profit-for-purpose toilet paper company that uses 50 per cent of its profits to build toilets in the developing world. Simon took something everyone needs and used the proceeds to help people in need, and in five years has been able to donate \$1.9 million to help build toilets.

Time: 8am – 9.30am + networking

Date: Wednesday 18 March, 2020

Keep an eye out for booking information:

<https://greaterdandenong.com/businessworkshops>



Pictured left to right: Nida Azad and Zahra Islam

Student talent brings innovative business success

Less risk, lower turnover and cost efficiency are some of the benefits local businesses are seeing from working with recent graduates and students.

Dandenong's *Pentana Stanton Lawyers* has employed three lawyers and one legal assistant in recent years as a result of placements and internships.

Penny LaGreca, Principal Solicitor for the firm, says the business worked with a nearby recruitment agency to participate in the PaTH Internships program. The internship gives youth the chance to demonstrate their skills to a potential employer for four to 12 weeks. The programme provides financial incentives to the provider, host business and participant.

Ms LaGreca ultimately employed the PaTH intern permanently as a Legal Assistant.

"The PaTH internship can be very helpful if you're at the stage of business where you want to grow, but you're not sure if you can afford it," Ms LaGreca says.

Pentana Stanton Lawyers recruited another PaTH intern in October as a legal assistant.

The business also participates in placements for law students. "All three lawyers we've gone on to employ from placements are adding value to our business," Ms LaGreca says.

Chisholm Institute's Stephen Zuluaga teaches students in I.T. and Business, and is also a Co-Founder of Hoodic, which helps businesses attract and retain the right people.

"Graduates and students can provide cost-effective solutions for business problems because they're very open minded and know the latest innovations," Mr Zuluaga says.

"Students need to start having conversations earlier with workplaces and businesses and not rely on traditional job-seeking sources. Often students don't think about where their skills can be productively deployed in the economy.

"Utilising IT for example, can increase efficiencies for manufacturers, or it can help in the product development process, as a local business discovered when creating rear-vision camera systems for heavy machinery."

"Graduates and students can provide cost-effective solutions for business problems because they're very open minded and know the latest innovations"

Council's South East Business Networks (SEBN) has been working closely with jobseekers and employers through its Community Revitalisation employment project. SEBN encourages all employers to factor PaTH into their recruitment strategies; recruiting and retaining a young workforce is critical for the future growth and sustainability of businesses.

Play your part in creating a future-proof Dandenong workforce by taking on a student today.



Uncle's Smallgoods celebrates multiple wins at national awards

Greater Dandenong-based business, *Uncle's Smallgoods*, is celebrating after winning medals at the 2019 Australian Food Awards (AFA) for every category entered.

This is the first time the family-owned business has entered the prestigious competition, and is proud to have its products recognised nationally as winners.

"We are thrilled to be recognised against the country's best producer. It really confirms that all the hard work is paying off and our products really are the best in the country," says Brendan D'Amelio Production Manager (and Owner).

The AFA, conducted by The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria (RASV) offers Australian producers broad opportunities to leverage their success locally and internationally with AFA's national brand seal of quality.

Entrants have the opportunity to benchmark against set criteria, receive invaluable independent feedback from industry experts, and be rewarded for excellence.

Customers looking to purchase the award-winning products can visit Uncle's Smallgoods Smokehouse at 123 Thomas St, Dandenong.



Couch chat: Starting a foodie business

City of Greater Dandenong's (CGD) Food Enterprise and Tourism Officer, Helen Beekmans, sat down with Environmental Health Officer, Kim Hoang, to chat about their roles in supporting the local food and beverage manufacturing and retailer community.

HELEN: Starting a business can be overwhelming and many get lost in the rules and regulations required to operate legally and safely. Let's kick off by describing our roles and see if we can't shed some light on the value and need for food safety, Kim.

My job is to champion our business community so that they can prosper. I work in the Economic Development team and we are the first point of contact for new or existing businesses looking for support. How would you describe what you do, Kim?

KIM: Environmental health officers focus on educating and enforcing relevant state legislation on food safety. Our team do this by assessing businesses to ensure compliance with the Food Act, and through targeted advice and training to food vendors.

HELEN: There are a number of rules and regulations your team enforce for the wellbeing of our community, and to protect businesses from potential legal trouble. What do food operators need to do to ensure they meet requirements?

KIM: The Food Act provides the regulatory framework for the food industry to ensure food sold in Victoria is safe, suitable and correctly labelled. CGD shares responsibility for developing and administering food regulation alongside the Australian and Victorian governments.

HELEN: My role is largely focused on connecting our businesses to the right support. From an environmental health perspective, what is the first step a food business should take?

KIM: Great question, we suggest businesses visit the Council website (greaterdandenong.com/startingabusiness) and the Department of Health and Human Services website (www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety) to identify the steps to get started.

Businesses should also review the Food Standards Australia - New Zealand (FSANZ) Food Standards Code website (foodstandards.gov.au) to understand the construction requirements of a food premises and good food handling practices.



Pictured left to right:
Kim Hoang and
Helen Beekmans

“I think food allergens and labelling. The terminology used in the health space continues to grow and knowing the difference between gluten free, gluten free friendly, vegan, vegetarian etc., can be a challenge for anyone – especially in our community where English is often the second language.”

KIM: We are always looking at ways to help communicate public health messaging and we can't wait to collaborate on some workshops in 2019-20. It's no secret, we want our businesses to succeed!

HELEN: I have been in my role for over four years, and I've been able to meet so many wonderful people, experience such a diverse, vibrant multicultural business community and celebrate so many local success stories. What is the favourite part of your role?

KIM: Seeing businesses adopt a good food safety culture, where all staff have been trained in food safety and are committed to making this the top priority.

HELEN: We have been talking about the practicalities of getting a business up and running but I have to ask, what is your favourite cuisine?

KIM: I think I'd have to say the traditional Sunday roast.

HELEN: Okay that is making me hungry. I think we can call it a wrap. Thank you for chatting with me, Kim.

Local food businesses will be invited to attend a series of training workshops delivered by the economic development and public health units in coming months. A range of topics will be explored including food handling protocols, OH&S, risk assessment and brand reputation management. **Keep an eye out for the event listing via www.greaterdandenong.com/businessworkshops**

HELEN: What do you see as the biggest challenge for food retailers during the next 12 months?

KIM: I think food allergens and labelling. The terminology used in the health space continues to grow and knowing the difference between gluten free, gluten free friendly, vegan, vegetarian etc., can be a challenge for anyone – especially in our community where English is often the second language. Educating the business community has become a big part of what we do but it isn't our only duty, it is a challenge to balance it all.

HELEN: I am excited about our two teams working together to develop a series of training sessions to help educate our food retail and manufacturing sectors about food safety in the coming months.

2020 trade missions – a chance to increase your global connections

Global Victoria have a number of trade mission opportunities in 2020 designed to support businesses to expand their potential with international markets. Typically sectorial focused, with tailored programs for participating businesses, trade missions provide key opportunities to:

- build international connections, foster business relationships and identify partnering opportunities
- enhance your international profile by entering new markets
- attract foreign investment
- secure local distributors and/or importers
- acquire international orders for your product and/or service
- develop skills and knowledge of international markets to enhance your business's global competitiveness
- understand regulatory requirements in international markets.

Activities on trade missions include business briefings and networking functions, site visits, trade exhibitions and business matching. Further information visit <http://global.vic.gov.au/for-exporters/trade-missions/about-our-trade-missions>



Victoria ramps up sustainability agenda with ban of single-use plastic bags



Did you know that Victorians use more than 1 billion plastic shopping bags every year? The majority end up in landfill and around 10 million end up as litter, polluting the environment and endangering wildlife.

These confronting statistics support the Victorian Government's state-wide ban on lightweight plastic shopping bags (with a thickness of 35 microns or less), including compostable, degradable and biodegradable plastics. The ban commenced on 1 November 2019.

This law applies to all retailers and suppliers regardless of size or type—from supermarkets to fashion boutiques, fast food outlets to petrol stations and penalties apply for noncompliance.

The ban aligns with the government's agenda to reduce single-use plastics and plastic pollution more broadly, and to encourage a more circular economy of reuse and recovery.

Many businesses have forefronted the change including Japanese retailer, Uniqlo. The brand has committed to switch to eco-friendly paper bags across its 21 Australian locations, and will encourage customers to bring their own reusable bags by charging 15c per bag. The store will also sell branded bags made of recycled plastic bottles for \$2.90.

"Sustainability has increasingly become a priority on the global agenda and as a leading retailer, it has been crucial for Uniqlo to look at how we can address this key issue, whether from a clothing design perspective, or current in-store practices," Kensuke Suwa, *Uniqlo* Australia's Chief Operating Officer, said.

The National Retailers Association (NRA) is working with the Victorian government to support businesses with the ban, and has set up a toll-free Bag Ban Hotline (1800 817 723) to help with the transition.



Detailed information about the ban can be found at www.epa.vic.gov.au or call 1300 372 842.

Shop local and spread the spirit of the season

Small businesses have a big impact on their local communities, donating an average of \$10,000 to local charities, plus a similar amount to local schools, sporting clubs and sponsorships of local groups or events. They create jobs for the community and generate business for local suppliers.

According to an Australian business report from American Express, 'The Economy of Shopping Small 2018', 70 per cent of consumers say they shop at a local shopping village at least once a week, this number has fallen from 82 per cent in 2016.

Sally Curtis, Marketing Manager for Parkmore Shopping Centre in Keysborough, says their business owners are mainly local people.

"It's important to support local businesses so that community members continue to thrive and prosper. It's also convenient to shop close to home, especially during the busy festive season.

"As a service centre, our customers can access five different banks, or

send out cards at Australia Post, in addition to all the options for gift shopping with around 120 specialty stores," Ms Curtis says.

The Centre has installed a new Santa set, which it launched in November with a community family night. Customers with special needs can book a 'sensitive Santa' photo online. One side of the installation also features a 'selfie side'.

Parkmore Shopping Centre will have late trading nights in the lead up to the festive season.

"We have a really strong offering for fresh food with great butchers, seafood stores, delis and bakers – we cover every element you need for Christmas, and some of these stores offer online ordering to make it easier during the busy season.

"We also have two options for gift wrapping, with one of these stations fundraising for charities that alternate weekly," Ms Curtis says.

Other festive shopping options in Greater Dandenong include:



- Dandenong Market for fresh produce, gifts, festive decorations and a lively crowd;
- Springvale Homemaker Centre to freshen your home interior or for impressive presents – and where you can have an hour of peace via IKEA's childminding service (book in advance);
- Douglas Street, Noble Park, with around 100 retail businesses offering a friendly atmosphere and comprehensive variety stores; and
- Armada Dandenong Plaza, which features supermarkets, affordable fashion and homewares among other shops.

Little India keeps on shining

Recent efforts to capitalise on Little India Dandenong's status as a colourful and vibrant local attraction is bearing fruit.

The Little India Shopping Festival held on 12-13 October, ahead of Diwali festivities, demonstrated how well the precinct is poised to give visitors a unique Indian experience right in the heart of Dandenong.

Trade was brisk, with glittering street stalls, artful window displays and Desi pop music adding essential atmosphere. Traders staged entertainment to acknowledge Diwali, which was well attended by the Indian community, Greater Dandenong

councillors and Dandenong MP Gabrielle Williams.

Cultural and Food Tours

By the end of 2019, virtually all shops along Foster and Mason streets will have benefitted from shop front improvements, including newly painted facades and upgraded signage. This, along with Indian themed street and power pole art, is giving Little India a distinctive look not found elsewhere in Melbourne.



To capitalise on this refreshed tourism offer, Council has recommended its Little India Cultural Tour program, now held Saturdays, blending the experience of Indian art, fashion and cuisine in the one excursion.

Call 8571 1666 to join a tour.

Marketing Little India

Internationally award-winning consultancy, NEXT Brand & Strategy Design, has been appointed to develop a Little India Marketing Plan. Recognised by State Government as Victoria's first Indian Cultural Precinct, this Plan will guide the precinct's promotions.

A key element is to build the trader community's capacity to ramp up its marketing efforts, and in partnership with Council, implement staged marketing activities during the period.

Winning an award can help build brand reputation

Units sold. Customer reviews. Annual revenues. All of these facts can add legitimacy to your core offerings. However, human beings are sceptical creatures and many consumers assume these metrics are fake. Consumers want trustworthy brands that can deliver on their promises.

How can a business build consumer trust? Independent credentials are much harder to forge and as a result, far more legitimate for consumers. These credentials can take the form of accreditations, award nominations and if you are lucky enough, an award.

“The awards night is always a great evening we look forward to each year. We have such a strong business community which is something to be proud of.”

In light of the importance of consumer trust, have you considered nominating yourself for an award? The annual Greater Dandenong Chamber of Business Awards seek to recognise and honour outstanding business achievements in the Greater Dandenong area.

In the lead up to the 4 December awards night, the Chamber has run evening showcases to present nominees. Four showcase events were presented and a total of 11 businesses and four Chisholm Youth Enterprise nominees were spotlighted.

Business nominees relate to one or more of the following categories:

- Small Business Award
- Large Business Award
- Retail Business Award
- Corporate Social Responsibility Award
- Employment Award
- Innovation Award

Nominees must be located within the Greater Dandenong municipality and can either be self-nominated

or nominated by a peer. Judging is performed by an independent panel of business professionals who volunteer their time and experience.

Paul Broom, President of the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce, said: “The awards night is always a great evening we look forward to each year. We have such a strong business community which is something to be proud of.

It is a chance to connect with our members, share stories and congratulate those who have made some great leaps and bounds in their business.”

For event tickets visit
www.greaterdandenongchamber.com.au

The Greater Dandenong Chamber Business Awards

Date: Wednesday 4 December

Time: 6.30pm – 10.30pm

Where: Sandown Greyhound Racing Club

Pictured Left to Right: Paul Wood – NAB and GDC Awards Committee; Rick Bean – Thrifty Car and Truck Rental, nominee; Stella Ta – Boswen, nominee; Jack Gillibrand – Soccer 5's, nominee; Jason Ashton – Macpherson Kelley and GDC Awards Committee.



Better Approvals means better business for all



“This system makes it easier for businesses to work through the process and be realistic about time frames and costs from the onset.”

The City of Greater Dandenong will soon launch a new system to streamline approvals for small businesses. The Better Approvals Project has been introduced across more than 40 councils to date.

The Victorian State Government initiative aims to reduce the time, money and stress involved for small businesses (up to 20 employees) to obtain relevant regulatory permits.

Frances Grigoriou, Council’s Economic Development Coordinator, says the Better Approvals structure uses a ‘concierge’ system.

“This project is aimed at small businesses needing to source more than one permit from Council. Businesses will be able to approach

the Better Approvals Team, which will manage the process.”

According to Ms Grigoriou, business owners have previously gone through the process in a “linear” way.

“After obtaining one approval, they then discover they need an additional permit and so on. Through Better Approvals, these can be managed simultaneously. This system makes it easier for businesses to work through the process and be realistic about time frames and costs from the onset.”

Overall, across Victoria, the Better Approvals Project has seen an impressive 76 per cent reduction in the permit approval process time, from 204 days, down to 48 days. Similarly:

- planning permit times have reduced from 113 to 65 days; and
- health permit times have reduced from 77 to just 17 days.

“This is a genuine partnership between State and Local Governments. After an intense six-week period working with external consultants, representatives from Council departments and local businesses, we’re currently testing the process before rolling it out,” Ms Grigoriou says.

For further information about the new process, contact the Economic Development Team by email: business@cgd.vic.gov.au or call 8571 1550.



Interested in capability development and sharing learnings with your peers?

If so, then get involved with SEBN – from CEO to Production and activities for all.

Specific networks that meet regularly to enhance and embed learnings include:

- Manufacturing Leadership for CEO / Senior Management
- Manufacturing 'Xcellents' for production managers / shop floor
- South East Quality & CI Network (SEQN) for continuous improvement
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Developing Young Leaders
- SE Women in Business
- CEO Series (quarterly)
- CEO Mentoring (quarterly)

All enquiries to sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au or SEBN Manager sandra.george@cgd.vic.gov.au

Future-proofing your business

Business leaders looking for growth into the next decade will need to look at everything through a different lens to view the future. The market in which we all operate has an equal mix of challenges to overcome and exciting opportunities to unlock.

We need to act and think differently. We need to innovate in how we develop and deliver value for customers, but also enhance employee experience and simplify business models and go to market strategies.

This requires a new mindset from business leaders. The core of innovation - adding value through thinking differently and delivering real change – comes from curiosity. Curious about what customers really need is a great place to start.

As we head into 2020 this is an important time to step back and think – how will we compete in a fast-changing world that, will not only build our resilience, but enhance our ability to truly compete?

A challenge for all leaders – and an exciting one too.

(article courtesy of James Atkins, Vantage Strategy – jatkins@vantagestrategy.com.au)

To read the full version of this article, visit <https://vantagestrategy.com.au/blog-post/blog-45/>

What happens AFTER the changes? In 2020, this will be the prompt for much exploration and idea sharing across the SEBN program.

SEBN Christmas Industry Event – Friday 6 December

The Greatest Myth: "Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast"



Do not miss this great wrap up to the SEBN year – bring your colleagues and customers to celebrate the end of 2019 and enjoy a great speaker at the same time.

Featuring Ben Darwin – former Rugby Union and Wallabies player, now leading expert and global speaker on culture management and team building.

To book email sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au

LOOKING FOR LOCAL TALENT?



worklocalgreaterdandenong.com.au

Register today to:

- Place your vacancy on the portal free of charge
- Access local job seekers
- Search resumes of registered job seekers.

For more information contact SEBN on:
Ph: 8571 1576
Email: sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au

Work Local Greater Dandenong



Golf Day

Diarise Now! 11th CGD-Industry
Take a Swing for Charity Golf Day

February 2020

Register your EOI here and we will be in touch early in the New Year.

Igniting the Start-Up World



Pictured left to right: Back row: John Gulzari, Lisa Elliott, Marcus Barber, Judy Pridmore, Peter Dostis
Front row: Sarah Williams, Ivy Asis, Sandra George, Riz Akhtar, Adam Mokhtar

Participants of the *Ignite Greater Dandenong* start-up training program tested the viability of their business concepts at a formal pitch night in September 2019.

Having a snappy sound-grab business pitch that turns curious members of the general public into investors and customers is not easy – nor is selling the potential of a start-up in a convincing and memorable way. However, the Ignite Greater Dandenong Pitch Night saw six enthusiastic ‘start-ups’ pitch their idea to a panel of local business leaders, professionals, and start-up founders. The ideas and stories which had been nurtured over the 12-month program, provide a nice conclusion of their journey through this free, joint Council and LaunchVic initiative.

The pitches were outstanding, ranging with some common-sense

business ideas (that will make our lives much simpler!), to impassioned social enterprise start-ups, designed to fit into our rich community in Dandenong and the South East. The pitchers started with something they had noticed in their world that needed a solution. From there, they set about developing a plan or product that would meet the need.

Guest judges Peter Dostis of Runway Geelong, Judy Pridmore of *Pridmore Consulting*, Marcus Barber of *Looking Up Feeling Good* and Sandra George – Manager, South East Business Networks (SEBN) had many hard decisions to make. They were joined by an audience comprising other Ignite participants and start-up ‘colleagues’ from the City of Casey Innovation Hub.

The overall winner on the night was Riz Akhtar – featured in the

September edition of *Talking Business*. He and his business partners received a prize of \$500 to be spent on their business - *Carloop*. Riz’s pitch was well-planned and tested, showing a clear need and providing an exciting and workable solution.

A special Judges’ prize was awarded to Ivy Asis, whose social enterprise idea could help to feed disadvantaged families across the South East region. They were joined by fellow pitchers Sarah Williams, John Gulzari, Lisa Elliott and Adam Mokhtar. Congratulations to all for their enthusiasm and commitment to developing new businesses - especially Ivy, Riz and the *Carloop* team!

For more information about Ignite, go to ignitegreaterdandenong@cgd.vic.gov.au #ignitegreaterdandenong

Events calendar 2019-20

CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG RUN BUSINESS EVENTS

EXTERNALLY RUN BUSINESS EVENTS

DECEMBER

3 December
Middle East Export Readiness workshop

6 December
SEBN Industry Christmas Breakfast

3 December
SEO Foundations for Small Business
Monash City Council

4 December
Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce Business Awards Presentation Night

JANUARY


Did you know?

- Lynda.com provides access to online courses at any time on your computer or mobile device. They can be paused, bookmarked, and added to a playlist. Use your Greater Dandenong library card to access this for free!

FEBRUARY

19 February
Wellbeing in the workplace by Smiling Mind

6 February
6FOR6 Pitch Night
Eastern Innovation Business Centre

20 February
Lunch and learn: Balancing startup and family life – stories from successful founders
Eastern Innovation Business Centre

MARCH

18 March
Social enterprise showcase, Who Gives a Crap

4 & 24 March
Vendor Panel information sessions

3 March
Lunch & Learn: Utilising your visible and invisible networks
Eastern Innovation Business Centre

*Bookings, locations and further enquiries relating to these events please visit the respective organisations website.

Roving Christmas entertainment set to create festive vibe



Look out for our highly entertaining and engaging characters in the lead up to the busiest retail time of the year. Captivating entertainers will be roving the streets in the week leading up to Christmas – watch out for our fabulous entertainers who will be spreading festive cheer to the community. Look out for our entertainers between 11am and 2pm at the following locations:

Location	Roving Entertainment Address	Thursday 19 December	Friday 20 December	Monday 23 December	Tuesday 24 December
Dandenong	Harmony Square and Palm Plaza, Dandenong	Gizmo	Three Kings	Jangle & Christmas Musical Duo	Three Kings
Springvale	Multi Cultural Place - Buckingham Avenue, Springvale		Jangle	Three Kings	
Noble Park	Douglas Street, Noble Park	Three Kings			Jangle & Christmas Musical Duo

Local businesses to benefit from Council signing the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative



Local businesses who engage with the City of Greater Dandenong will now benefit from a range of additional support measures and programs thanks to Council recently signing the Small Business Friendly Council initiative.

Developed by the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC), the initiative is about addressing problems and hurdles confronting small business owners by making it a lot easier to start and run a business.

Greater Dandenong Council CEO John Bennie met with Commissioner Judy O'Connell to talk about business supports, and how the area would benefit from the initiative and to sign the Charter.

Signing means the council is now on board to work with local businesses and the VSBC on a range of measures to support their existing array of services and programs, including:

- paying small businesses within 30 days
- helping to set up and support local business networks
- working towards faster permit approvals
- helping to manage impacts to trade caused by disruptive infrastructure works.

Mr Bennie and Commissioner O'Connell talked about Greater Dandenong's diverse multicultural community, and the VSBC's want to make its services more accessible through new translated small business resources.

With a strong local business community rich in manufacturing, health care, construction and retail trade, Mr Bennie is pleased to be signing up.

"Local businesses are the lifeblood of our local area and signing up to this initiative is an important way that we can further support them to prosper and grow," Mr Bennie said.

Minister for Small Business the Hon Adem Somyurek MP said the Victorian Government is committed to creating a fairer business environment.

"Our Small Business Friendly Charter helps councils support local small businesses and boost economic growth," Minister Somyurek said.

Commissioner O'Connell congratulates the council on making the pledge.

"We're so pleased to have City of Greater Dandenong make this important commitment to work with us in their ongoing work to create an inclusive and competitive business environment," Commissioner O'Connell said.

Learn more www.vsbv.vic.gov.au/

Global Table – the biggest agribusiness event in Australasia

The City of Greater Dandenong's Food Enterprise and Tourism Officer, Helen Beekmans, was invited to be part of the Advisory Committee of Global Table – an inaugural event now recognised as the biggest agribusiness event in Australasia. This collaborative summit provided a fantastic opportunity for Australian and international producers to showcase their quality products, make connections and share ideas and solutions to common challenges.

Managed by the Victorian State Government and delivered by Food and Wine Victoria, Global Table is part of the Victorian Government's \$15million Taste Victoria Initiative which aims to boost the state's international profile, competitiveness and export opportunities across the food and fibre sector. Agriculture is vital to Australia's and Victoria's prosperity, and State Government is committed to improving the sector's capability and productivity and retaining its competitive edge through innovation.

The event was a meeting place of the leading global minds in the agriculture, food and beverage industries. More than 3,000 delegates from 29 countries and 238 speakers, including 48 international speakers from 14 countries, were in attendance. Keynote speakers were: the 68th US Secretary of State, John F. Kerry, Dr. Howard-Yana Shapiro and Shama Sukul Lee.



The Hon. Jaclyn Symes MP, Minister for Agriculture, Regional Development and Resources with local Greater Dandenong business, Sallie Jones, Gippsland Jersey

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