

Talking Business

March 2021

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Paul's Corner

Welcome to the first edition of Talking Business for 2021.

Last year gave us scores of new words, phrases, expressions and metaphors. Some new to the popular vernacular whilst others comical and others usually reserved for the medical industry. As I write this I am thinking of how many of these 'trigger words' I use.

I would be glad to never hear or use phrases such as 'its been an unprecedented year' and 'you're on mute' for a long time. However, as we continue through these uncertain times we know this year will have some similarities to the last. On a positive, Australia is rolling out its vaccine program and case numbers continue to remain low compared to the rest of the world. My team are remaining hopeful for a better year ahead and we've seen this notion reflected in many of our businesses who have been so resilient.

In this edition, we celebrate International Women's Day, sharing some fabulous stories about women in business which you can read throughout the magazine. In particular, our front cover story is of Navy trailblazer Captain Mona Shindy who is our keynote speaker at the International Women's Day event, learn more about this virtual event on page 12.

South East Melbourne finally has an A-League and W-League club to call its own. You can read about this on page 3.

We extend our congratulations to our local businesses who received one of Council's Business Recovery Grants in 2020. We check-in with three of these recipients to see how they are doing on page 7.

We hope this quarter is productive for you and your business. Remember if you need support please don't hesitate to reach out to our Greater Dandenong Business team via business@cgd.vic.gov.au or 8571 1550.

Paul Kearsley
Director Business, Engineering
and Major Projects

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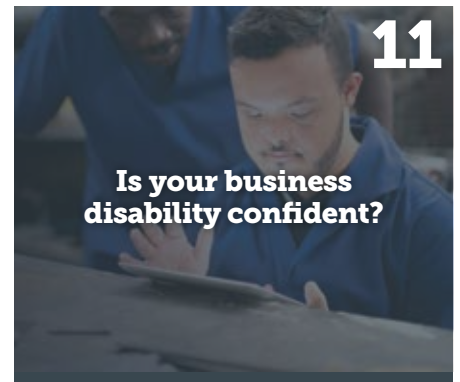
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South East scores first A-league and W-league for the region



Artistic impression of the City Football Academy at Casey Fields.

After four years of advocacy and toil South East Melbourne finally has an A-League and W-League club to call its own.

On December 15 2020, Melbourne City Football Club announced it had signed a Heads of Agreement with the City of Greater Dandenong and the City of Casey, paving the way for it to relocate to the south-east.

This outcome follows in the footsteps of the 'Team 11' A-League bid, spearheaded throughout 2017-18 by the Greater Dandenong, Casey City and Cardinia Shire councils in conjunction with the region's business and football communities.

While Melbourne City's relocation spells an official end to 'Team 11', planning for the club's move came after an exhaustive period of work with the councils involved. This outcome has been fully endorsed by 'Team 11' stakeholders.

Melbourne City will co-develop with the City of Casey a new training and administration base at Casey Fields in Cranbourne East that will house all of the club's teams and staff.

And in relation to the long-mooted plans for a boutique rectangular stadium to be built next to Dandenong Train Station, Greater Dandenong Mayor Cr Angela Long said, "The Dandenong Sports and Events Centre (DSEC) was an important part of the 'Team 11' bid and this announcement marks a step forward in bringing that plan to life".

The Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) organisation representing South East Melbourne's eight local councils also endorsed the move and said it creates the perfect opportunity to construct a new purpose-built sports and entertainment venue in the south-east.

If DSEC were to come to fruition the venue would be a major catalyst project that would complement the Revitalising Central Dandenong initiative and boost the local economy with job creation and tourism.

As per the mantra of 'Team 11', Melbourne City intends to embed itself firmly within the region's football and business communities.

The club's charitable arm, City in the Community, which runs community outreach programs harnessing the power of football, will also relocate.

Melbourne City's junior teams started training at existing facilities at Casey Fields in February, with all of the players and staff planning to officially relocate mid-year ahead of an anticipated completion of its new training base in March 2022.



Artistic impression of proposed Dandenong Stadium which accompanied the Team 11 bid in 2018.

A Snapshot of our Greater Dandenong Tourism sector

Tourism is not new to Greater Dandenong, but it is new to Talking Business. We now have a regular segment sharing the tourism offerings we have in our city. This will include articles on our tourism operators, what's happening in our accommodation venues and let's not forget the adventure/action venues across our municipality.

If you're a local tourism operator and have a story you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you or if you have a tourism question, send an email to our Food Enterprise and Tourism Officer, Helen Beekmans via Helen.Beekmans@cgd.vic.gov.au.

Ibis Budget Dandenong secures ALLSAFE accolade



We can all relate to the repercussions of COVID-19 and the accommodation industry is no exception.

Despite the devastating impacts this global health crisis has had, there are still moments to celebrate and be grateful for. For example, Ibis Budget Dandenong, located on Princes Highway, Dandenong reached out to us to share their great accolade throughout this tough period in time.

The global brand Accor which Ibis Budget Dandenong belong to, launched a global initiative in May 2020 for all Accor hotels to be certified ALLSAFE – a new safety label. The ALLSAFE label has been developed and verified with Bureau Veritas, world leaders in testing, inspections and certification.

On 4 July 2020, Ibis Budget Dandenong became an approved ALLSAFE hotel, after successfully undergoing extensive audits and inspections, ensuring full compliancy

across all areas was achieved. Regular inspections and audits are completed to maintain these standards with three dedicated staff members enlisted as ALLSAFE Officers who have undergone additional training as an extension to their current responsibilities. An ALLSAFE Officer will always be available onsite at the hotel 24/7.

Congratulations to the team at Ibis Budget Dandenong for completing this training during exceptionally difficult circumstances. It's a testament to the team in securing this accolade.

Learn more:

Ibis Budget Dandenong
185-193 Princes Highway, Dandenong
all.accor.com/hotel/3584

Lovers and makers of beer united at Brick Lane Brewing



The Brick Lane Brewing (BLB) Community began when 25 friends came together with an idea.

The Brick Lane Community started with an idea to celebrate the great

brewing community in Australia and to create a place where all makers and lovers of good beer can come together.

Their purpose-built facility in Dandenong South is one of the most innovative and flexible independent breweries in the world, showcasing the highest standards in brewing and sustainability. The brewery has been built (and continues to expand) with state-of-the-art brewing facilities, process and packaging equipment. The BLB team ensure quality and consistency is the norm with a reduced environmental footprint a key focus.

The facility was engineered to reduce primary energy consumption, reclaim energy from kettle vapour and minimise waste streams. BLB is the first independent Australian brewery to adopt cross-flow filtration technology by the Pall Corporation which reduces energy and water usage, improves beer quality and eliminates the need to use non-renewable filtration aids like diatomaceous earth.

The Brick Lane Brewing Community includes all those who enjoy good beer - drinkers, customers, partner brewers, suppliers, friends and other independent brewers. The business has an amazing home base in Dandenong. They believe in inclusivity and diversity in brewing and have an obligation to do good in their local community.

BLB actively engage with a broad range of partners across a variety of areas – from brewing great beers, to helping community organisations and charities.

They strive to have a beer for everyone, no matter where you are on your craft beer journey. From their bloody good Draught, through to the award winning One Love Pale Ale and Lager, through to their IPAs, limited releases and Someday Sours. They've always got something new in the plans and love introducing their beers and different styles to everyone. The BLB bar is open on Thursdays and Fridays, with plans to develop the space further for events and functions.

Learn more:
bricklanebrewing.com

An iconic institution in Dandenong worthy of a pitstop



Lunar Drive-In is famous for its animated neon rocket sign above the ticket box, which is constantly photographed and shared on social media. That's not all the drive-in is renowned for, based in Dandenong it is the largest drive-in theatre in Australia.

The drive-in has four screens showing all the latest Hollywood blockbusters, including frequent screenings of classic and retro titles. The business is open every night of the year, except Christmas night. Charging only \$30 per carload (for up to 7 people) its quite a steal. David Kilderry owner of Lunar Drive-In says, "films should be affordable for every family, this way they can afford to visit often, making it a family tradition."

When the global COVID-19 health crisis arrived in Australia the drive-in was forced to shut its gates like many businesses. At the peak of Victoria's first COVID lockdown, the business had just completed its \$4 million expansion. A new Lunar Café and upgraded facilities were all ready to open with the café boasting 10 customer service points, catering for hungry crowds with over double the floor space.

As restrictions eased towards the end of 2020, Lunar Drive-In was ready to welcome back customers. David and his team have added extra ticket boxes and entry lanes which assist with a speedier entry and expanded parking areas add much needed extra space. Online ticketing is also available along with the still popular nightly sales at the five ticket boxes.

The Lunar Drive-In is one of the city's major tourist attractions attracting over 400,000 people in 2019. The drive-in attracts most of its patrons from a 20km radius, but also from country Victoria, interstate and overseas visitors each day of the week.

Drive-ins are now a rarity in most other parts of Australia and the world. Australia once boasted 350 drive-ins and yet, just 17 remain in 2021. David says, "there are no parking problems, no babysitter concerns and you can come dressed as you are and enjoy a night watching movies under the stars in your cars. The Lunar Drive-In; entertaining you since 1956 in Dandenong."

Learn more:
lunardrive-in.com.au

**Did you know?
Greater Dandenong
has...**

3.23%

**of our businesses are
tourism operators/
related**

619

**accommodation
and food service
businesses**

154

**year old traditional
working Market
(Dandenong Market)**



There is so much to do and see in **Greater Dandenong**

Anastasié receives food as part of COVID-19 relief work in Rwanda by Compelled By Love and their partners.



Compelled By Love through good times and bad

These have been trying times for many and local Dandenong South organisation, Compelled By Love (CBL) is no different.

Speaking with Karen Visser, CEO of Compelled By Love confirmed 2020 drove home the reason for the organisations existence. Working across three communities in India, Rwanda and locally here in Victoria, the focus is all about empowering people and empowering communities. CBL partner together with local organisations, who are experts in their field to design and deliver projects with the aim to empower people and provide opportunities for growth, change and transformation.

Local projects – Keysborough Secondary College

The team have been supporting the No Limits (NL) program at Keysborough Secondary College, working with both at-risk youth, as well as emerging leaders, to discover their potential and encourage positive life choices. The program works with year 9 and 10 students, with a goal of early intervention, to strengthen individuals and families, to prevent homelessness for youth at risk, and to develop young leaders in schools.

NL is a three-way partnership between the school, Explore

Adventure Therapy and CBL. Explore Adventure Therapy deliver the program, whilst CBL provide the funding, connect volunteers to the program and contribute to ongoing reviews and development of the program.

Projects abroad – Rwanda

Many families in Rwanda who CBL work with were literally going without food because lockdown restrictions meant all income was cut off and they were not provided government support. Karen commented, “...we (CBL) have been able to continue to provide all of our partners and projects, despite the challenges we have also been facing here on home soil.”

This support was not possible without the generous assistance from another local Greater Dandenong business – The 3fold Group who are a key donor partner for CBL. This business is made up of 3fold Resources Pty Ltd and Orchid Furniture Pty Ltd.

Karen added, “As a result of their ongoing support we’ve been able to provide emergency food relief to over 2,195 people and 1,284 masks to enable people to leave their homes for essential items and social connection.”

Karen continued, “...it would have been an easy time for The 3fold Group to step back and focus only on their business. They are an incredible organisation who have a wider perspective, supporting not only their employees, but both their local community and communities in need around the world.”

Projects abroad – India

Compelled By Love partners with a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Nagpur, India. The primary focus of CBL’s work in India is education - giving children an opportunity to receive an education which leads not only to employment, but to the development of the whole person. Karen added, “we’ve been able to provide family support to our students, alongside the normal education support and help them access online materials for their studies.”

This project provides education support to students through the provision of funding to quality, English-medium schools, as well as books, stationery, uniforms, transport and private tutoring as required.

Learn more:
compelledbylove.org.au

Business Grants Program

The Business Grants Program during 2020 aimed to provide immediate financial assistance to eligible Greater Dandenong small to medium sized businesses affected by COVID-19.

Council ran two rounds of applications which saw a combined total of over 360 successful applicants. This equalled an investment of over \$600,000.

See below a few stories of some of our successful applicants below.

No Bolt **29 Union Rd, Dandenong South**

To get any job done safely and efficiently, you need the right equipment. Dandenong South manufacturing and engineering business, No Bolt, understands this taking an engineering-led approach to design and manufacture work and access platforms.

Like many, Will Collie (WC) Managing Director of No Bolt was faced with new challenges when the pandemic reached Australian shores in 2020.

“Around 40-50 per cent of our revenue came from our work in Aviation. We previously designed, manufactured and supplied a range of height safety equipment to airlines Qantas and Jetstar,” WC said.

COVID-19 put a freeze on both domestic travel and international travel and as a result there was (and continues to be) an effective freeze on spending. As such, the business has seen sales drop by 40 per cent and specifically in the Aviation sector, almost back to zero. No Bolt applied for Council’s Business Grant program and was successful providing the business with an opportunity to work on marketing their other product lines.

WC added, “..we are using these funds to build a new website to support our new product line, outdoor tables, which is quite different to our core focus of safety and aviation. Our focus has typically been the design, engineering and manufacture of falls from heights solutions, we view this grant as an opportunity to develop a new business unit outside our typical markets.”

The grant has made it easier to separate this new product development from the existing business. At the time of this interview, the team had engaged a web designer and were in the process of developing the artwork.

Looking ahead, WC knows it will take years for the aviation industry to recover to pre-COVID-19 levels.

There are also many positives to look forward to for WC and his team who are currently working in a design capacity on the West Gate Tunnel project. WC said, “we expect to have three business streams in 2021 – Design and Manufacturing of Height Safety Solutions, Design and Engineering Advice and Outdoor tables.”

Learn more:
nobolt.com.au

The Bubble Express **3 Buckley St, Noble Park**

The Bubble Express is a laundrette located in Noble Park. Director of The Bubble Express, Wayne Hawkins tells us how during the lockdown he was faced with the challenge of needing to desperately update his note to coin machine which had been vandalised numerous times.

Hawkins said, “Not having a change machine put my coin laundry at a significant disadvantage to other like businesses in the area.

“I was suffering a 50 per cent income reduction at the height of the COVID lockdown.”

Hawkins credited Council’s Business Grants Program which had enabled him to replace the change machine.

Hawkins added, “I gratefully received a \$2,000 grant from Council, and I want to thank them enormously for the grants program, to assist in purchasing a note to coin change machine and custom made security cabinet.”

Looking forward, Hawkins is seeking to consolidate his business by providing his customers with the cleanest, most efficient and best value Coin Laundry in the area.

Lucia Sofia Malejko **(Beauty Therapist)**

Local Dandenong South beautician, cosmetic tattoo artist and beauty trainer, Lucia Sofia Malejko, found like many others, last year to be one of her most challenging. Lucia commented how she was forced to close her business for six months last year until restrictions began to ease.

Lucia submitted her grant application and was successful in securing funding. Lucia recently wrote into Council to express her gratitude and showcase her product she had purchased as part of the grant requirements.

Lucia said, “I would like to say a huge thank you to the Greater Dandenong Council as I was able to purchase this (photo inset) beautiful Cosmetic Electric bed. I have always had a big issue with my massage table which wasn’t designed for cosmetic tattooing.”

Operating as an individual sole trader, Lucia wasn’t able to access many of the State and Federal Government grants.

“When I realised my local Council were offering a grant program targeted at small business including people like myself, I couldn’t believe it. I cannot say thank you enough for helping my little business,” said Lucia.

In February, Lucia found out she had been nominated for two awards, ‘Beauty Therapist of the Year’ and ‘Sole Trader in the Beauty Industry of the year’ at the Australian Beauty Industry Awards.

Learn more:
luxuryeyebrow.com.au



Re-onshoring Australian manufacturing



Adapting to radical change is nothing out of the norm for local manufacturer, D&M Auto Industrial Spray Painting.

Over the years, Director of D&M Auto, Michael Van Dort and his business partner Darren King, used their strong background in panel beating and spray painting to boldly take on the big names such as Holden HSV, Toyota and Ford.

In recent times, the departure of automotive passenger vehicle manufacturing in Australia forced the businessmen to overhaul their organisation when facing the reality of losing 90 per cent of their work.

Today, we've seen the global pandemic forcing many local manufacturers to evolve to a set of constantly changing conditions which has ultimately further highlighted the risks of Australia's heavy reliance on offshore manufacturing.

D&M Auto are an early example of a successful pivot, converting from spray painting small auto component parts to expanding their offering

and collaborating with architects, designers, and artists.

D&M Auto have a staggeringly diverse resume, from painting non-chip wheel rims for HSV, GH Mumm's Bird Cage marquee at the Melbourne Cup, graffiti-resistant cladding for schools, installation art for Pullman Hotels, to dresses for the Commonwealth Games and Australian Ballet.

Van Dort commented, "we take up the challenge to meet our clients' needs with our network of local suppliers and chemist. Utilizing automation has helped us attain greater control and repeatability while reducing cost. If we had to return to the old ways, we simply wouldn't be around."

Australian suppliers are now working hard to close the price difference between local production and imports - with greater security, communication and responsiveness being the key competitive selling points.

President of the South East Melbourne Manufacturers' Alliance (SEMMA)

Peter Angelico said, "Cost is a one-dimension aspect of a procurement. Quality, environmental, and ethical considerations are increasingly shaping consumer choice.

They should also be a considerable influence on government procurement for major projects."

Van Dort also emphasises this point stating his business wants to continue to promote better quality Australian products.

"COVID reinforced onshoring for us and taking a collaborative approach to our work. We couldn't have started without the auto industry, they were the seed - from there, we grew," Van Dort said.

This story was supplied by SEMMA. SEMMA is the peak industry association representing over 200 leading manufacturing companies located in South East Melbourne, Australia's most dynamic manufacturing region.

Learn more:
semma.com.au

ATO Online services for business is here

Online services for business is the Australian Taxation Office's (ATO) new service replacing the Business Portal and electronic superannuation audit tool (eSAT).

It has been co-designed with business to improve the user experience and make it easier for businesses to interact with the ATO online.

You can now manage your tax and super obligations in a secure, modern channel which can be accessed on multiple devices, including a smart device such as your phone or tablet, at a time that is convenient to you. In addition to all of the current Business Portal functions, some of the new things you can do via online services for business include:

- Make a payment plan
- Receive copies of income tax returns
- View your communication history
- Use 'Switch ABN' to move between your businesses with a single login.

Learn more:
ato.gov.au/OSB



Artistic Impression of proposed development – Subject to Change.
Image courtesy of Development Victoria and Capital Alliance Investment Group.

The Victorian Government's Revitalising Central Dandenong (RCD) project is a gamechanger for the region.

As many of you may have seen just before Christmas, Development Victoria announced the Foster Street Redevelopment as the next phase of the Revitalising Central Dandenong project.

Following a competitive Expression of Interest and Request for Proposal process, led by Development Victoria, Melbourne-based developer Capital Alliance has been selected for the project.

The redevelopment area covers both sides of Foster Street from Settler's Square to Thomas Street/Cheltenham Road and includes the Little India precinct.

The proposed redevelopment is expected to:

- Deliver a new Little India precinct
- Inject \$600 million into the Dandenong economy during its development and construction phase
- Create 2,600 construction jobs
- Create around 5,000 ongoing jobs when it is operational

- Deliver 470 new dwellings and 2,500 square metres of community space
- Deliver new commercial and retail spaces, including a new supermarket and food market hall
- Further contribute to transforming central Dandenong into a vibrant and thriving destination
- Deliver social enterprise initiatives
- Improve public safety and amenity.

Construction of the first stage is expected to begin in 2023 following community and stakeholder consultation on the proposed master plan in 2021.

This redevelopment will complement Council's nearby redevelopment of the former Masonic Hall into the Greater Dandenong Gallery of Art and the former Precinct Energy Plant, creating multiple opportunities and key destination points for visitors and the community within a short walk of the train station.

Learn more:
development.vic.gov.au

Forever Fest 2021

Council staff have been busy continuing to plan the upcoming Forever Fest which will be held virtually from 22–30 May.

Monday 24 May will be a day dedicated to talking business and economy and how through small sustainable actions you can make a difference. Make sure you mark it down in your calendar and like our Facebook Event Page (link at end of article) to stay up to date with festival announcements.

As well as Dianne McGrath who will be the ambassador for the festival, Council is excited to announce some additional key speakers throughout the nine day event:

- Jodi Boylan (Executive Producer of ABC's program 'War on Waste')
- Alice Zaslavksy (TV Celebrity Chef)
- Charlotte Connell (Founder of the Sustainability Collective)
- Barney Swan (Founder of ClimateForce).

If you can't tune in for the whole nine days then there's no need to stress, Council will be launching a 'Taking Action Kit' on the last day of the festival. This tool kit will have links to all the elements of the festival so you can catch up, plus information that will help you develop your sustainable goals for your business endeavors now and into the future.

Learn more:
greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/forever-fest

Contact: Lily Martyn
Event and Engagements Officer
Email: lily.martyn@cgd.vic.gov.au
Phone: 8571 1445

Jobmaker Hiring Credit

The JobMaker Hiring Credit is here and is giving businesses and young people impacted by COVID-19 a helping hand.

Helping young people secure jobs now will build their skills, improve

their career prospects and support Australia's economic recovery.

Eligible employers can claim up to \$10,400 for each new eligible employee hired between 7 October 2020 and 6 October 2021.

The first claim period for the JobMaker Hiring Credit opened on 1 February 2021 and closes on 30 April 2021. To receive the payments,

employers need to complete three easy steps:

1. Register
2. Nominate their additional eligible employees
3. Claim.

Learn more:
ato.gov.au/General/JobMaker-Hiring-Credit/

Dandenong Market Trader stories

Known as the world market, Dandenong Market is a 154-year old traditional working market set in Melbourne's south east. Dandenong Market offers everything from honeycomb fresh from the beehive, flowers cut straight from the farm, and

apples picked from the orchard. You can shop and experience the world as a local and get insider tips from expert traders, score amazing bargains and source seasonal produce.

The market traders, like so many businesses, have been hit hard by

the global pandemic. In this issue of *Talking Business*, we asked the Dandenong Market to share some of their traders success stories.

Learn more:
dandenongmarket.com.au

Cafe Marketto



Cafe Marketto Co-Owner, Chandni Kulasinghe.

The pressures of owning a new business in 2020 were amplified for new owners of Dandenong Market's Cafe Marketto, Chandni Kulasinghe and husband Naresh, as COVID-19 restrictions forced them to close their doors.

The husband-and-wife duo began operating Cafe Marketto under new ownership in March last year, days prior to Victoria's first lockdown.

"I was devastated" said Chandni.

The pair made the difficult decision to close the cafe which operates out of Dandenong Market's Bazaar, following announcements restaurants could only remain open for takeaway.

"I watched the dream I worked so hard for disappear in front of my eyes. We tried offering takeaway options, but it didn't work," Chandni said.

First established in 2009, Cafe Marketto remains one of the Market's top coffee spots. Tucked away from the hustle and bustle of the food market, Chandni says Cafe Marketto is the perfect spot to enjoy a quiet meal or a coffee and cake with friends and family.

Since changing hands the husband and wife duo have updated the menu to be more inclusive to a wider range of customers by adding delicious vegetarian and gluten free breakfast and lunch options.

Foodies are invited to delight in some of Chandni's favourite meals any

Market day; French omelette, French toast with wild berries and Marketto style benedict.

Cafe Marketto offers affordable breakfast and lunch dishes made with love and 100 per cent locally sourced ingredients, with some coming from the Market itself.

This year has started a new chapter for Chandni, Naresh and Cafe Marketto as business begins to adapt to a 'COVID-Normal' scenario.

The duo are positive yet cautious for the year ahead, stating they are looking forward to having a fair chance to prove themselves and their business.

Customers can dine in or takeaway with Cafe Marketto on Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 8am until 4pm.

Hours of operation are subject to change as guided by the Victorian Chief Health Officer.

Peninsula Organic Farmgate



Peninsula Organic Farmgate Owner, Natasha Shields.

Natasha Shields opened Peninsula Organic Farmgate at Dandenong Market amid Victoria's second COVID-19 lockdown in July 2020.

Peninsula Organic Farmgate is one of the Market's only fully Certified Organic stalls stocking Australian sourced fruit and vegetables, meat, bread, grocery items and

everything in between. The team grow their deliciously fresh produce locally at their farm in Baxter on the Mornington Peninsula.

Natasha opened her stall to help customers cut out the middleman. "We wanted to connect with consumers" she said. Natasha comments how she loves being able to sell Certified Organic produce at an affordable price.

The Peninsula Organic Farmgate range is based off customer feedback. Some fan favourites include heirloom carrots, beetroot, and cauliflower but Natasha's go-to is her crisp lettuce varieties.

Peninsula Organic Farmgate's first few months at Dandenong Market might not have been as busy and bustling as they had first hoped, with as many as half of Natasha's fellow Market traders forced to close their doors and many regular customers restricted by a 25km travel ban for essential items.

Despite this, the team adapted to overcome these unforeseen circumstances.

The business began offering delivery to allow customers to continue supporting small business despite the distance. Deliveries from the shop and from the farm were sent out along the Mornington Peninsula and into the south, east and south eastern suburbs.

This year presents Natasha and her team with the opportunity to finally grow the business within Dandenong. "I'm looking forward to meeting more people who are interested in shopping organically" she says.

Peninsula Organic Farmgate is located in the Meat, Fish and Deli Hall at Dandenong Market next to NZ Street Food and is open 7am-4pm.

Hours of operation are subject to change as guided by the Victorian Chief Health Officer.



Is your business disability confident?

Becoming disability confident makes good business sense, and has been shown to improve outcomes, innovation and productivity. However, even if your organisation is open to the idea of welcoming people with disability you may be unsure about exactly what to do.

There are many resources available to businesses to learn and grow. Council has an existing partnership with The Australian Network on Disability (AND) which has proven to be highly successful.

AND is a national, membership based, for-purpose organisation which supports organisations to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business. They are the national peak body assisting Australian businesses to actively include people with disability as employees and customers.

AND has assisted Council to adopt a "Reasonable Adjustment Policy" as well as assist Council in updating the Council website to encourage people with disability to consider Council as an employer of choice for people with disability.

Furthermore, Council continues to encourage increased access to employment opportunities for people with disability by providing:

- Annual hosting of graduates with a disability for work experience.
- Training for managers responsible for employment at Council.
- Ongoing revision of employment processes and documents to ensure equal opportunity standards are met.

Another program of AND's that Council is involved in is the Stepping into Internship program.

This paid internship is open across all industries and has become a highly valued talent pipeline for organisations actively seeking to employ people with disability as part of their recruitment strategy and in their graduate programs.

AND Relationship Manager, Amber Tratter said, "City of Greater Dandenong have been a valuable member of AND since 2013, committed to advancing the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of Council. Six university students with disability have completed internships at Council, and some have gone on to secure casual employment within Council."

It's widely agreed the most valuable way to improve employment outcomes for people with disability is through innovative programs that help set them up for a lifetime of work.

Internships, mentorships and employer-led recruitment strategies build a business' disability confidence and gives vital work experience to jobseekers.

Learn more:
and.org.au/pages/resources.html

JobAccess

JobAccess is an Australian Government initiative that provides workplace and employment information and resources for people with disability, employers and service providers.

JobAccess provides funding through the Employment Assistance Fund (EAF) to cover the costs of making workplace changes. This can include buying equipment, modifications or accessing services for people with disability.

Learn more:
<https://www.jobaccess.gov.au>

A new radio station created by women for women

Broad Radio is radio for women, by women, who love deeper conversations, who are seeking content that expands their world and news they might not get anywhere else.

Broad Radio is the brainchild of CEO Jo Stanley, who had a simple idea – a radio show for women, by women. Jo already had the experience she needed to make it happen, as she has been making radio in Melbourne for 20 years, including 12 years of breakfast radio and two number one shows. She knows better than most what her listeners have been craving.

Jo started talking to anyone who'd listen about this radio station which didn't exist - yet. Today, Broad Radio is real. Jo Stanley and her colleagues are building their station 'from the ground up' beginning with one hour per week, streaming live on Facebook and Youtube. The radio show has stories about inspirational women. The team plan to expand into longer hours and across more days in the near future.

The growing radio station isn't all talk, they have big hearts, clear with their intent explaining they are here to support all women. Their website stating one of their missions 'we love a laugh and a gasbag. But we also want to make a difference. Older women are the fastest growing group of homeless people in Australia. Support our charity partner, Women's Housing Limited, as they provide low-cost housing to women at risk of homelessness. Together, we aim to raise \$50,000 for Women's Housing Limited this year.'

If your business has been looking to support a startup the team are always grateful for partners and sponsors. You can contact Jo and her team via hello@broadradio.com.au to start a conversation.

To listen to the show, tune in 9am Tuesdays (AEDT) via www.facebook.com/BroadRadioAus.



A better match – working together to build your workforce

Last year created many challenges and impacted us all. Despite this, the Community Revitalisation project explored a range of ideas to build jobseeker's knowledge of local business and industry, plus give them the opportunity to connect directly with employers they might not otherwise meet.

Through a series of workshops, employers from various sectors generously donated their time. They informed jobseekers about their sector, showcased their businesses and highlighted their

job opportunities while also giving the attendees a chance to 'Ask an Employer' their job readiness questions.

Jobseekers heard from representatives of the manufacturing, warehousing and logistics, horticulture, labour hire, health and local government sectors as well as attending a session providing recruitment insights.

Feedback from jobseekers was overwhelmingly positive which has prompted us to produce a series of video interviews with local

employers. These will be promoted via the Council website to provide jobseekers a window to the many and varied businesses in the region. The outcome of this work aims to provide better employment matches.

Why not showcase your business and participate in an interview? Contact Project Officer, Jennifer Ebdon on 0438 510 840 or jebdon@cgd.vic.gov.au

Together, we can continue to build the capacity of local jobseekers to meet the needs of local employers.

Network Chat 2021: Can you afford not to be involved?

As many of you know, the SEBN networks mantra is 'local manufacturers learning and sharing together', and so with 2021 getting off to yet another uncertain start, it's even more important we focus on assisting and supporting companies to not only survive, but take full advantage of the opportunities currently on offer.

Some of the key themes we're exploring include the new global opportunities for SME manufacturers and expanding on our activities around waste and the environment.

If you're interested in capability development and sharing learnings with your peers, then get involved in the suite of networks available with SEBN. Offerings range from CEO to production, quality, Work Health Safety (WHS) and Developing Young Leaders - there's something for all levels of your business.

Networks meet regularly to enhance and embed awareness and learnings.

To be involved please email sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au or SEBN Manager, Sandra George via sandra.george@cgd.vic.gov.au.



Australian Navy trailblazer, Captain Mona Shindy.

Celebrating International Women's Day

This year's International Women's Day theme is 'a challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes change'. At the time of going to press, SEBN is looking forward to celebrating International Women's Day with a breakfast on the morning of Wednesday 10 March. Held in conjunction with the Dandenong Chamber of Commerce, this event is free and hosted online. Our guest speakers this year are Captain Mona Shindy, a fascinating speaker and Australian Navy trailblazer and The Hon Gabrielle Williams, Minister for Women.

Women In Business network

SEBN Women in Business has a new look with an exciting program of network sessions and speakers planned throughout the year. To join in the fun and learning email sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au.



The quiet achiever



Dandenong businessman Nirad Shah believes everyone is “inherently good”, and it’s this goodness that has seen the annual CGD-Industry charity golf day, ‘Take a Swing’ flourish for more than a decade.

Since its inception, the event has raised almost \$500,000 for organisations doing incredible work for the local community.

Tee-ing up the Take a Swing event

Mr Shah’s family business, KPJ Group, dreamed up the initial concept for the golf day in 2009, saying it has always been part of his “family DNA” to give back to whichever community they are living in.

“We wanted to do something for the community that was not only sustainable, but also fun and involving groups. In reality, it’s been a huge group effort driven by a lot of people,” Mr Shah says of the event’s success, refusing to take credit for any key role in SEBN’s Take a Swing event.

“The things you do in life are all about teamwork and for me, it’s the joy of seeing players come and enjoy the day and seeing recipient charities bring their clients to assist.”

The team to which Mr Shah refers includes organisations such as Grenda Group, Erntec, Norden Group, Future Recycling, Wadeson IP, Telstra Technology Centre South East and Dandenong Nissan & KIA, as well as City of Greater Dandenong and South East Business Network (SEBN).

“We have a genuine desire to work together and support the community, rather than having our names up in lights, which is what makes it work.

“The event is really well organised by Sandra and her team and we pitch in when we can. A lot of companies and people have been involved with

the event over the years and the rule is, enter with a smile and leave with a smile!”

A global upbringing

Born in Kenya, raised in the United Kingdom with an Indian background, and having moved to Australia in 2001, Mr Shah illustrates the invaluable contributions immigrants can make to Greater Dandenong and Australia.

“A lot of migrants come from that sort of culture where family and community are incredibly important. In Dandenong, certain communities can get a bad rap, but we need to understand where they’ve come from, what hardships they’ve been through, and find the right support for them,” he says passionately.

Mr Shah was recently awarded Corporate Citizen of the year at the 2021 Greater Dandenong Australia Day Awards for his contribution to the Take a Swing for Charity Golf Day, recognising the hundreds of thousands of dollars KPJ and other major sponsors have raised for the event over the past 11 years.

According to Mr Shah, SEBN enables him to meet people from different worlds and different types of organisations, and to identify where he can add value.

When corporate social responsibility can help children of the world

“As a family, we’ve worked with different charitable organisations and focus on causes where all of the money goes straight to the recipient rather than to administration costs. In essence, it’s about whatever little we can do to help and bring others along on the journey,” Mr Shah says.

“We’re passionate about causes focussed on the welfare of children, including those supporting survivors of family violence, and education.

“More recently, we’ve also been supporting the School For Life Foundation, which educates more than 1,000 students in Uganda across three schools.”

www.kpjgroup.com

Inset image: Local Dandenong Businessman, Nirad Shah.

12th Take a Swing for Charity

Despite another lockdown at the time of going to print, final preparations were in place and excitement mounting for this year’s CGD-Industry Take a Swing for Charity Golf Day. Once again being held at Victoria Golf Club, this fun-filled day will raise funds for two local charities – Keysborough Learning Centre and Asylum Seeker Resource Centre – whose work benefit so many of those most in need in our community.



Under construction – website employment space coming soon

The Community Revitalisation team is also working on an integrated ‘Employment’ space on the new Council website. Incorporating links to our existing Work Local Greater Dandenong employment portal and other employment related resources, this space is intended to provide an employment hub for both local jobseekers and local employers.

Watch this space!

Free and low-cost ways to upskill your business online

As a small business owner, you're already responsible for so many things. Where do you find the time and money to invest in furthering your business skills?

If you're managing fine as you are, upskilling might not seem necessary, but think of upskilling as an investment with long-term returns. It's not just the best way to grow your business, it's also a way to sustain your business in the face of a changing market economy, encroaching competitors and new technology.

Today, you can upskill your business without having to do a TAFE course (although there are many great TAFE courses available), with both in person and online options available.

We've compiled a list of a few places to help you in your search.

Council led initiatives

One on One Business Mentoring

Price range: Free

Delivery method: Online or in person (pending current restrictions).

Each local business is entitled to receive three 45-minute mentoring sessions with a professional of their choice, for free.

To receive your voucher email

Council via business@cgd.vic.gov.au with your business name, address and contact information.

South East Business Networks (SEBN)

Price Range: Free

Delivery method: Online or in person (pending current restrictions).

Few organisations allow you to leverage the positive impact of collaborative networking as effectively as SEBN does. SEBN has been enabling the sharing of ideas for the region's manufacturing sector for over 20 years.

Learn more:

greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/south-east-business-network

Greater Dandenong Library

Price range: Free

Delivery method: Online or in person (pending current restrictions)

It's free to become a Greater Dandenong Library member. Your membership gives you free access to computers and online learning courses such as LinkedIn Learning and Ibis World. Our Libraries also play host to English language classes, resume writing support, technology classes, creative and business workshops.

Learn more:

greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/libraries

External offerings

Upskill My Business

Price range: Free

Delivery method: Online

Last year the Victorian Government released Upskill My Business, a free learning platform to help small businesses develop relevant business skills to help them recover from the impacts of coronavirus (COVID 19).

Upskill My Business connects you to short courses, virtual events and resources from Victoria's top industry experts and education providers – including universities.

Learn more:

upskill.business.vic.gov.au

Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) training and events

Price range: \$50+ (members receive discounts)

Delivery method: Online or in person (pending current restrictions).

VCCI is a business membership organisation that offers a range of services, including advocacy, consulting, networking and training. If you're a member of the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce you can receive 50 per cent off your VCCI membership.

Their courses cover topics such as finance and productivity, Microsoft Office skills and personal competencies like leadership and emotional intelligence.

Learn more:

victorianchamber.com.au/training



LinkedIn Learning

Cost: \$24.99 to \$39.99 per month, plus a free one month trial. If you're a Greater Dandenong Library member you can access this resource for free using your membership.

Delivery method: Online

LinkedIn Learning, formerly Lynda.com, is an online learning and professional development platform. Through short videos that come in a range of expertise levels, you can learn everything from communication and strategy to how to use certain computer programs.

Made by experts in their fields, courses often supply work materials and are broken into bite-sized videos so you can squeeze in a few minutes of learning a day or binge a whole course.

Learn more:

linkedin.com/learning

Google Ads certification

Cost: Free

Delivery method: Online

The search engine Google has become a staple in day-to-day life. So much so that 'google it' has become a generic catch-all to mean 'search the internet'.

If you want people to find your business, you need your website and Google My Business listing to be optimised for Google to find you, also known as SEO (search engine optimisation).

Learn more:

skillshop.withgoogle.com

A fresh upgrade on tradition for the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce is shaking things up with new offerings whilst respecting the successes of their impressive 73-year history.

A refresh of the existing website offers additional business resources and streamlined membership access for events, advice and support.

That's not all they are doing – there is plenty more.

There is no argument on whether or not the hospitality and tourism industries suffered throughout 2020. The Chamber is focusing on making the foodie industry a key focus for 2021. At the time of printing, the Chamber was planning on inviting members on a Dandenong Food Tour hosted by Council to celebrate the diversity of offerings available from our vibrant local community. However, due to the Victorian Government quick five day lockdown in February plans have had to be put on hold.

For those entrepreneurs and new business owners, the Chamber has a bevy of experienced business

operators to connect with. The Chamber is now offering entry level membership for those with little capital and time, who might want to dip their toe in the water of membership benefits.

President of the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce, Lisa Moore commented, "Our membership levels provide a way for us to facilitate connection between all business leaders in our community. We often forget big businesses would've started small too. We wanted to reflect this in our membership tiers, giving the small businesses the chance to mingle with the big business leaders."

Moore continued, "There are so many opportunities for our members to help one another by working together on projects. We certainly want to see that local support continue to grow this year and we're keen to help facilitate these introductions."

The Chamber know how to celebrate great businesses. This year they are developing professional resources - to celebrate and further promote their success. This will include

sharing amazing business stories with the broader community.

The Chamber was unable to host its annual Chamber Business Awards program due to the pandemic in 2020 but this year will see the relaunch of the program - with new and innovative initiatives on show. Be sure to get in touch if you want to be a part of the Business Awards in 2021.

Lastly, extending upon the 2020 timely COVID reopening business advice, the Chamber is engaging experts to support business challenges in what is the current 'COVID Normal.' Subjects will include the importance of wellbeing, belonging and place-making (both in the office or home-office) for staff. A business is only as good as its people – and the Chamber prides itself on helping businesses thrive in Greater Dandenong.

Learn more:
greaterdandenongchamber.com.au



In the spotlight

Ever wondered who wrote the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce newsletters, was the friendly voice on the end of the phone when you called with a membership enquiry or arranged a networking night where you met some fabulous connections and took home a cheeky donut or two?

There is lots of work that goes on behind the scenes that you often don't see that makes an organisation tick.

Last issue we introduced the newly appointed President of the Greater Dandenong Chamber, Lisa Moore and learnt a bit about her background and hopes for 2021.

This issue, we'd like to feature Executive Officer, Tiffany Murray and Events and Marketing Officer, Tamara Moore. Tiffany has been with the Chamber for five years and Tamara recently joined the team in 2019.

Both women have a love for bringing events to life which is what originally drew them to their respective roles. However, as the Chamber continues to grow and expand its services their roles have grown too.

Tiffany stated, "It certainly isn't a boring role. We've met so many wonderful businesses and it has been great to watch them grow over the years."

Tamara adding whilst last year was tough as everyone navigated their way through a pandemic, there was

a sense of pride in knowing the work they were delivering to members was invaluable.

"In a time of absolute uncertainty, it was comforting to know we were playing our part in helping both our community and in turn local economy continue to hang in there," Tamara said.



Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce's Executive Officer Tiffany Murray and Events and Marketing Officer, Tamara Moore.

From paper to pixels...

Did you know the Talking Business magazine is available electronically?

To swap to a digital version email
business@cgd.vic.gov.au



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