

# Talking Business

March 2023

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## Paul's Corner

Our first magazine for 2023 and it's an edition jam-packed with information for you. The new year often brings new faces to organisations and that has certainly been true for us here at Council. We introduce our new CEO, Jacqui Weatherill on page 3, who started with us just prior to Christmas. The Dandenong Market also welcomed a new General Manager (story on pages 10-11) and the South East Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA) appointed a new CEO too (story on page 14).

Council has been working hard to improve our business permit support service, making it a more convenient, streamlined approach for businesses to apply for permits with Council. We explain the process in detail on pages 4-5. Checking-in with Council is a really important first step when you are looking to start, relocate or renovate your business premise as we can assist you navigate the complexities before you make any financial commitments – such as signing a lease or purchase agreement.

In this first edition of the magazine in 2023 we've interviewed some great local businesses to hear their stories including Street Food Turkey, Stealth Electric Vehicles and Beacon House Montessori.

The Business Support team (Economic Development) is always looking to learn from our business community and celebrate successes and support wherever possible. You can always contact the business team via [business@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:business@cgd.vic.gov.au) or phone 8571 1550 and a member of this team will be in contact with you.

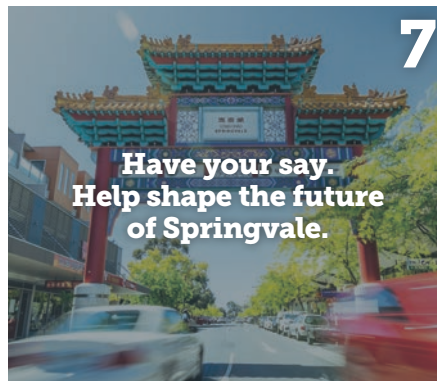
**Paul Kearsley**  
**Director Business, Engineering**  
**and Major Projects**

## FEATURES



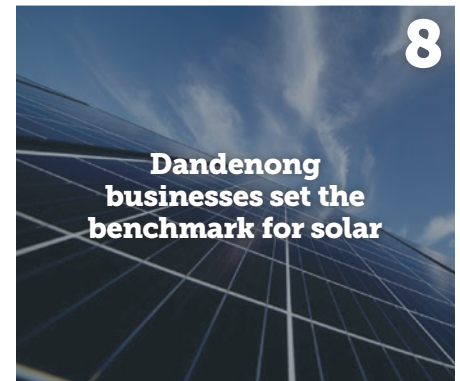
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**Cover:** Local Greater Dandenong business, Street Food Turkey located at 381 Chandler Road, Keysborough. Story on page 6.

Information was correct at time of publishing. Please check our website for up to date information.

# Meet the CEO

In December 2022 Greater Dandenong City Council welcomed our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Jacqui Weatherill has been a CEO for more than 10 years, including at the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust and most recently at City of Stonnington.

Prior to those roles she worked in senior roles at both the City of Boroondara and Benalla Rural City Council.

“Having worked in local government for the majority of my working life, it is a sector that I am very passionate about. I am especially excited about this role as it is such a diverse and vibrant community with so much to offer,” Jacqui said.

“I am particularly keen to work with the Greater Dandenong business community, which has shown strength and resilience over many years, but particularly over the past three years.”

Jacqui has spent the summer settling into her new role, getting to know staff at Council and learning about the vibrant and diverse community of Greater Dandenong.



“I am looking forward to consolidating and expanding on the great work that has been done across the city over the years. There has been a lot of investment in this region, and I want to see that continue.

“I want to see our city recognised as a great place to live, work and do business.”

The Greater Dandenong Business Unit is a dedicated unit within Council to support and champion our business community. There’s support to help turn your idea into

a business, grow your business as well as networking opportunities for businesses of all sizes.

“Our Placemaking and Revitalisation team is also supporting the development of precincts across Greater Dandenong,” Jacqui said.

“By creating great places we attract more people to our city, and they in turn support your businesses. We care about our business community and are committed to working alongside all of you to build a better Greater Dandenong. Your success is our success.”

## Business Engagement Survey provides pathway forward

Council’s Business Support team (Economic Development) offers a variety of different initiatives to support the local business community. Council is always looking to improve on service delivery and that’s why Council recently conducted a business engagement survey.

The aim was to identify what business services Council provide that are currently being used and recognise gaps where further support may be needed. This initial survey will become an annual process to ensure all services remain relevant to our business community. This survey did not include questions about the South East Business Networks (SEBN) services.

Council received 238 responses which will inform the decision-making

process when reviewing service offerings throughout this year. The survey was made available across a variety of mediums including the e-Talking Business electronic database, social media and Council’s website for a period of six weeks.

In a high-level summary, we learned 94 per cent of respondents found the Talking Business magazine to still be a valuable publication and 74 per cent preferred reading the magazine via the e-newsletter as opposed to print. When asked about future concerns across the next 12 months, increased costs, energy shortages/costs and supply chain challenges were the top issues. Lastly, when asked what services Council could provide to support businesses throughout this

year the most popular responses were:

- Introductions to key businesses and government bodies
- Business expansion or relocation support (within Greater Dandenong)
- Business marketing and communication support (such as buy local campaigns)
- Business Permit Support.

The Business Support team is analysing and adapting services to ensure this feedback is taken onboard. If you have a business enquiry or concern you can contact Council at anytime via:

**Email:** [business@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:business@cgd.vic.gov.au)

**Phone:** 8571 1550

**Website:** [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/business](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/business)

# Looking to start, renovate or expand your business? Your first steps explained.

Council's **Business Permit Support Service** helps people who want to start, expand, or buy a business. This process will let you know what permits and registrations you need before you open your business.

This is the first and best step to take which can save you time, money and potential headaches.

## Who does this apply to?

If you plan to:

- Sign a contract, lease or purchase agreement
- Begin or start any fit-out or work on your premise
- Start operating a business

It can be overwhelming thinking about the types of permits you may need and that's why Council has developed a Business Permit Checklist to simplify this process for you.

## Why should I complete this checklist?

Your business may require permits to operate. Your business location and how you plan to operate it, can result in the need for one or more permits issued by Council, government agency or private consultant.

Different teams in Council are responsible for issuing different permits, for example:

- Planning – for land use, signage and parking.
- Building – to comply with building legislation. Council no longer issues building permits. Businesses will need to engage a private building surveyor to assist you with building permit requirements. Visit the Victorian Building Authority to view a list of practitioners: [vba.vic.gov.au](http://vba.vic.gov.au).
- Public Health – to comply with 'The Food Act' and 'Public Health and Wellbeing Act'.
- Local Laws – for community safety.

The new Business Permit Support Service talks to all of these different



departments for you. This can save you time and money and means you only talk to one key Council contact.

## How long does it take to complete the checklist?

The checklist typically takes less than five minutes to complete and will provide you with clarity about the permits you may need.

Our business team will then call you within three working days to:

- Discuss your proposal in more detail
- Talk to you about the permits you may need
- Help you through the permit application process from the beginning.

## Can I talk to someone?

If you need help completing the Business Permit checklist, contact the Business Support team via email [business@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:business@cgd.vic.gov.au) or telephone 8571 1550.

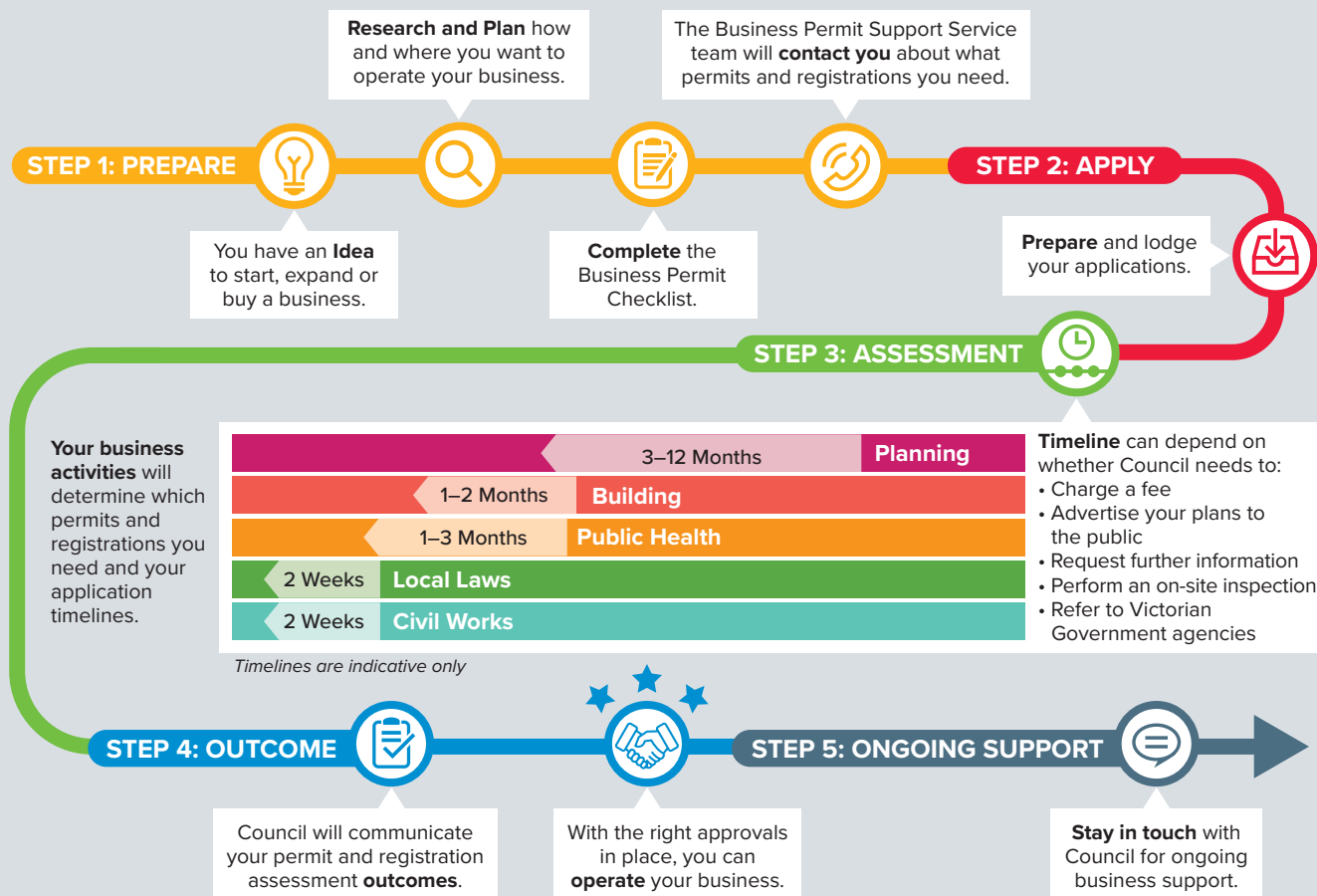
## Is there a video to explain this process?

There is a helpful video on Council's website which explains this checklist process and why it is important.

► **View the video and complete the checklist by visiting:** [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/business/business-permit-support-service](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/business/business-permit-support-service)

# City of Greater Dandenong

## Starting, expanding, or buying a business?



### Permit Types

Depending on the intended business activities, one or more of the following permits will be required.

Planning	Building	Public Health	Local Laws	Civil Works
For land use, development signage and parking.	To comply with building legislation, change of use and fit-outs, a permit may be required. Council no longer issue building permits. Businesses will need to engage a private building surveyor to assist them with building permit requirements. Visit the Victorian Building Authority to view a list of practitioners – <a href="http://vba.vic.gov.au">vba.vic.gov.au</a> .	To comply with 'The Food Act' and 'Public Health and Wellbeing Act'. The Food Act 1984 does not recognise transfer of registration anymore. A new application for a food premise is required.	For any activity on the footpath within the municipality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placing of chairs and tables</li> <li>• A-frame sign</li> <li>• Display of goods</li> <li>• Playing, singing or entertaining</li> <li>• Selling of goods.</li> </ul>	For works carried out on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A footpath</li> <li>• Nature strip</li> <li>• Roadway.</li> </ul>

To understand the application process, and to learn about approvals you need to operate your business, contact our Business Permit Support Service team. Ph. 8571 1000 | [BusinessPermits@CGD.vic.gov.au](mailto:BusinessPermits@CGD.vic.gov.au) | [www.cgd.vic.gov.au](http://www.cgd.vic.gov.au) TIS: 13 14 50

## Grants to help your business grow

Whether you are looking to grow your business or need support to navigate through challenging times, your business could benefit from the pool of programs covering business development, employment incentives, disaster relief, energy rebates, wellbeing assistance and more.

Many more initiatives are available, targeted at specific sectors and business needs.

Current grants available to assist to grow business in Victoria include:

- Business Growth
- Employment Assistance
- Energy
- Disaster relief

- Wellbeing
- First Nations
- Tax Incentives.

Did you know? You can look up current opportunities via the Business Victoria website and filter the search to suit your needs.

**Learn more:** [business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs](http://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs)

# A snapshot of our Greater Dandenong tourism sector

Tourism offerings continue to strengthen across the City of Greater Dandenong, and we are pleased to share these great stories through this magazine.

**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](mailto:helen.beekmans@cgd.vic.gov.au)**

## Neon lighting adding a little spark to the Little India precinct



New neon lighting has been installed in shop windows to bring the popular cultural destination Little India in Dandenong to life. Traders selected lighting designs by Electric Confetti to celebrate their Indian culture and feature motifs associated

with flora, fauna and special occasions. The new lighting enhances the night time shopping experience in the area. The project was delivered with funding from the Victorian Government's Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts Program.



## Local Keysborough business celebrates its first year anniversary



Once upon a time 381 Chandler Road in Keysborough was a fish and chip shop. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the premise was leased by a new business owner and the site was transformed. Today, the site boasts a new take-away eatery serving up authentic, fresh, Turkish cuisine.

Meet Cem Canpolat, the business owner behind Street Food Turkey. "I've always been in business. My first business I started when I was just 23. My parents had run businesses but

that didn't mean I knew how to run one myself. I had to work really hard, it wasn't easy," said Cem.

Cem credits his biggest learning curve to when he went behind the scenes, stepping into the kitchen alongside his chef where he learnt how to prepare and cook the meals. Cem said, "That's when I really learnt how a business should be run. It begins with the food."

A Greater Dandenong local himself, Cem opened the doors to his new business venture in February 2022. The original plan was to turn the premise into a burger shop, however, after conversations with his family, in particular, his parents, Cem was convinced it was time to focus on sharing their home countries food – Turkish cuisine. "Everything had to be perfect, I wouldn't open the doors until it was. It drove my family mad. I wanted to break the perception in Australia that Turkish food isn't simply meaty kebabs. There are so many types of kebabs, not just the Shish Kebabs and the flavours are varied," said Cem.

Cem recognises the big role his whole extended family have played in supporting him on this latest venture. The welcoming smiles and laughter from the staff when you walk through the doors is refreshing and is certainly one of the reasons why this business has such a strong and loyal customer base after only 12 months of operation.

Prior to opening Cem did considerable market research, visiting Turkish restaurants in and around Melbourne. The business sources its produce locally as much as possible including fresh vegetables from the Dandenong Market.

Looking ahead, Cem plans to continue serving quality food to his loyal customers and introducing new customers to the variety of flavours Turkish food offers. "What's next? I always have ideas, I want to do more and go even bigger but you'll just have to wait and see," Cem teased.



► **Street Food Turkey**  
**Location:** 381 Chandler Road,  
 Keysborough 3173  
[streetfoodturkey.com.au](http://streetfoodturkey.com.au)



# Have your say. Help shape the future of Springvale.

What would you like to see in Springvale? What would make it a better place for our diverse community?



Council is currently developing the Springvale Revitalisation Action Plan, which is all about improving our local area for people who live, work, study, play or travel through Springvale.

By hearing from the community, we aim to unearth the spirit and culture of Springvale through

personal stories and experiences. These stories and answers are all part of the history of the place and your direct experiences and knowledge of your local area will guide the right decisions for improving Springvale.

Council will then use your feedback to make a plan to shape the future of Springvale.

There are several ways to have your say, including a survey, an interactive map and a chance to share your own stories including with photos and videos. The survey closes on 31 March.

**Visit [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/shape-springvale](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/shape-springvale) to have your say.**



There are so many adventures to be explored in **Greater Dandenong**

## Sustainability Festival a Success

On Sunday 26 February Council delivered the annual Sustainability Festival as part of the National Sustainable Living Festival 2023. The festival was curated to show the community just how easy it is for individuals to make impactful environmental change.

Council would like to thank Dandenong Market for hosting the event and to all the traders who kept festival goers fed throughout the day. Attendees were lucky to also receive delicious locally-brewed kombucha from local Dandenong South business, Remedy Drinks.

Local business owners who attended the event spoke with Solar Victoria about their Solar for Business Program, an initiative designed to support Victorian businesses to reduce their energy costs by accessing the benefits of renewable energy. You can still apply for this program, see link at the end of the article for further information.

In the week leading up to the main event day, *The Lorax* was screened at the Open Air Movies at Springvale Community Hub. The film was preceded by a pot planting activity facilitated by Bunnings Warehouse Dandenong South and was a huge hit with families.

Thank you to all our local businesses who were a part of the day and to residents for attending.

**Learn more:**  
[greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/sustainability-festival](https://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/sustainability-festival)



## Dandenong businesses set the benchmark for solar

Dandenong is leading the state in applications for the Victorian Government's Solar for Business program.

Manufacturers, mechanics, accountants, plumbers and even toy shops have all made the switch to solar to bring down their energy costs and reduce carbon emissions.

The Solar for Business program offers a rebate of up to \$3,500 plus the option of an interest-free loan of up to \$5,000 to reduce the upfront cost of installing rooftop solar systems. Under the program eligibility criteria, businesses with less than 50 employees can apply for both the rebate and interest-free loan, to be repaid over a 12 or 24-month term.

Childcare centre Beacon House Montessori is one of more than 120 Dandenong businesses that have signed up to the scheme.

Brian Hewagama started the learning centre with his wife in 2020 based on the self-directed and holistic Montessori education philosophy.

With respect for the environment ingrained in their learning philosophy, Brian said installing solar was a no brainer.

Brian said, "we teach our children about the importance of saving water, reducing waste and recycling. Though they don't understand exactly how the solar system works, they understand it's powered by the sun. Some of our older students have gone home and told their parents too, which spreads the word."

As a small business owner, Brian said the cost-saving benefits of solar also influenced him to make the move and the rebate scheme enabled him to do so without the centre's finances taking a hit.

"Solar is the way to go. You may not see the benefits from the moment it's installed but in the long run you see the value in it. It reduces the impact of carbon emissions and helps business with cash flow as well," said Brian.

**Learn more:**  
[solar.vic.gov.au/business](https://solar.vic.gov.au/business)



# Single Use Plastic Ban now enforced across Victoria

From 1 February 2023 the Victorian Government has banned the sale, supply and distribution of some single-use plastic items. The ban applies to all businesses and organisations, and any person who owns, manages or controls the business or undertaking.

## What items are banned?

It is now an offence to sell, supply, distribute or provide:

- Single-use plastic drinking straws
- Single-use plastic drink stirrers
- Single-use plastic cutlery
- Single-use plastic plates
- Single-use plastic cotton buds
- Food or drink packaging made from expanded polystyrene
- This includes items provided individually or in packets.



## How is it enforced?

The Victorian Government is working with businesses to ensure owners understand the ban but penalties will apply for non-compliance. Penalties can reach up to \$55,476 under Section 465 of the Environment Protection Act 2017.

## What should I do?

Do not order any more banned items. If you need alternative disposable items, speak to your suppliers about the most sustainable options for your business. Ask your supplier to answer questions in writing before you order alternative disposable items. It is an offence for your supplier to provide false or misleading information on single-use plastic items.

Displaying official signage can help your team explain the ban to customers. We recommend sourcing free factsheets, posters and digital materials – available in multiple languages at [www.vic.gov.au/plastics](http://www.vic.gov.au/plastics)

## Support for businesses

The Victorian Government has engaged the National Retail Association (NRA) to assist businesses to understand and prepare for the single-use plastic ban.

**Toll-free hotline:** 1800 844 946

**Email:** [sustainability@nra.net.au](mailto:sustainability@nra.net.au)

# Two Springvale inventors taking on the global small electric vehicle market

When are three wheels better than two? Ask two Springvale inventors and they'll tell you the answer, when it is safer for the rider and better for the planet.

In 2017, local business, Stealth Special Vehicles, set out to create a high-tech delivery vehicle that could safely operate on roads and suburban footpaths. Manufactured in Springvale, the OzPOD was recently declared the '...safest vehicle in its class' by Victorian based Delta-V forensic accident safety experts.

Business owner, John Karambalis said, "the impetus to build the vehicle came from a specific customer request. We had customers looking for a vehicle that could carry a decent payload that wouldn't tip over when traversing uneven footpaths or curbs."

John and his long-time collaborator Ian Drysdale, knew their decades-long pedigree of designing, building, and racing off-road vehicles would put them in good stead to create a world-class vehicle.

And they've got proof – their companion companies, Stealth Electric Bikes and The Drysdale Motorcycle Company, have been manufacturing high performance motorcycles and off-road electric mountain bikes for military and civilian customers globally.

Stealth Special Vehicles is a company with innovation at its heart. Becoming a maintenance organisation was never John's goal.

"The OzPOD is definitely a unique vehicle, but we designed it to integrate with existing fleet management programs. Our ruggedised, modular design extends the time between service intervals while reducing the burden for busy fleet managers. We provide value to our customers with an efficient and reliable solution for zipping around town," explained John.

Consumers and businesses alike are beginning to move away from fossil fuelled vehicles and stopping to consider alternatives such as low emission vehicles including electric vehicles.

John said, "...we currently have a fleet of OzPODs being trialled by Australia Post which is expected to increase rider safety while decreasing emissions and overall operating costs over the trial period."

Going from strength to strength, Stealth is currently on the hunt for a new facility which can handle OzPOD's rapidly expanding customer base.

"Dandenong is the perfect place for us. Many of our suppliers are local, and we have a loyal bed of customers who are supporting us to succeed. The Council's Business Support Team is really helping Stealth reach its potential," said John.

**Learn more:**  
[stealthspecialvehicles.com](http://stealthspecialvehicles.com)



# Meet Dandenong Market's new General Manager

Dandenong Market General Manager, Ian Sumpter.

In this issue of Talking Business, we'd like to introduce Ian Sumpter, Dandenong Market's new General Manager, with an informal chat at the ever-popular and bustling Market Square.

## First, Ian, what attracted you to the role?

Being community driven is one of my deepest core values and a key driver in me wanting to continue to work in this environment. I have had previous roles focussed on the delivery of commercial programs within the community at South Melbourne Market, The City of Melbourne and RSPCA.

Public markets play a critical role in the community, growing and connecting urban and rural economies. They encourage community and economic development by keeping money in the local neighbourhood. Public markets also offer low-risk business opportunities for traders, often from vulnerable populations.

It is a privilege to be offered the opportunity to come in as the new General Manager where I can bring together all of my skills and experience. I understand the significance of the stewardship

I have taken on and want to ensure the Market continues to meet the community's needs. I will guide it but ultimately it is owned by the people.

Everything we do needs to link back to community.

## We're all curious. What are your first impressions of Dandenong Market?

As soon as you arrive, the Market has a genuine community feel. Everyone is welcome. We have loyal customers and fantastic traders delivering quality merchandise and unique food offers every Market day. We cater for a wide range of demographics and socio-economic customers – that's a critical path for our future.

I love seeing the Market through the eyes of our customers, and within my first few weeks I was lucky enough to join one of Dandenong Market's Street Food Tours with my family. Tim, our very talented culinary

ambassador and absolute foodie, took us on a 1.5 hour tour of the various eateries across the market.

## What's your first priority?

Dandenong Market has always supported the community through tough times, as far back as World War I and the Great Depression. COVID-19 has been particularly tough on traders who were forced to close during the pandemic.

Driven by optimism, the Market is getting back to business as normal. Loyal customers have returned, prioritising shopping with small businesses over large chain supermarkets. Our 8.3 customer satisfaction rating ranks higher than Australia's top 100 brands. We not only want to attract more visitors by looking at growth opportunities, we need to future-proof the Market and set it up so it can reach its true potential for financial success and recovery.

### What's your vision for the Market?

I'd like to see investment in the existing Market to improve the physical infrastructure to incorporate sustainable design features, and building new facilities, as needed, to improve demand and address operational limitations.

I want our current traders to thrive. Now that most of our Market traders have survived the worst of the global pandemic with enormous support from Council to the tune of more than \$4.3 million in rent relief. I want Dandenong Market to grow as a sought-after destination for new and emerging businesses, meeting the community's needs and wants. Pre-pandemic, the Market welcomed 5.6 million visitors, I'd love to see those numbers again and to go one step further and increase them.

In addition to recovery from the pandemic, we need to invest back into the Market – that's a key priority. We need to invest in infrastructure, including the back-of-house operations, to ensure it supports the current needs and demands of our traders and visitors. The building is very old and we need to make sure the asset can support 40,000 visitors for a major event or trading day.

### You've been in the General Manager seat for a month (at the time of interview), how does that feel?

It's flown by because I started right before Christmas. I experienced

our busiest trading days of the year. After that we launched straight into 'World Fare @ Night' (images below) which is our night market season, over three Thursdays in January. We celebrated with 23,000 people and the feedback was all positive. Many traders came with their families to enjoy their workplace in a different setting. So I've witnessed the Market at its busiest and its best.

I see our geographic location as a huge plus and an opportunity to grow our reach. We are the gateway to Gippsland and we haven't really tapped into the Mornington Peninsula yet. You can be at the Market in half an hour from as far away as Croydon or Dromana with Eastlink on our doorstep.

Its exciting knowing there are opportunities to attract more customers.

### In your opinion, what's the Market's biggest strength?

Our diverse community is our unique point of difference. We have 157 nationalities working in harmony under one roof. We are not Queen Victoria Market nor South Melbourne Market – they have their own successful brands. We are a world market, reflecting our community. We are enormously proud.

I look at our footprint and the opportunities that can give us. I want to ensure we tie in with other wider precinct plans and leverage them to grow the Market.

I'm also keen to look at how we can use the space we have in different ways. Activating the Market at night is one example. World Fare @ Night was a huge success. Then we have anchor tenants like Market Tavern delivering Machan Nights, a unique landmark for the Sri Lankan community in Melbourne. Kabul Kitchen on Cleeland Street has a restaurant open seven nights a week.

I am supported by a wonderfully encouraging and multi-talented board and have inherited an exceptional and capable Market Management team. We have a strategy session coming up which will shape the next five years at the Market. We will have just completed our annual customer survey so that will inform our planning too.

### And the biggest challenges?

It is a privilege to be the custodian of one of Melbourne's greatest assets. I want to maintain a safe, enjoyable, functional, prosperous and vibrant place for all. Small words but a big job. I'm looking forward to it.

### Lastly, it goes without saying it's a big job, Ian. What do you like to do to unwind?

My family and I enjoy the lifestyle of living beachside. We are currently renovating our home which is a bigger project than first anticipated. I am a huge fan of Melbourne's events including the tennis and love mountain bike riding too – anything outdoors, really. I love listening to music too.



## Sandra's space



As you may already be aware, there is a lot of work taking place across Greater Dandenong and the region to address the 'mismatch' of jobseeker capability to employer requirements. Local, state and federal government departments are working collectively and collaboratively to bring all stakeholders together to shape a more effective jobs and skills system for all through our community led GameChange initiative.

One issue being addressed is the value of Flexible Workplace Models which we saw emerge in the early days of the pandemic, companies adopted new work practices out of necessity. The value of this has increased among both employees and employers – not only attracting talent, but also increasing productivity. Recruitment and retention are the key components – critical in today's environment when finding staff is an ongoing challenge.

In this edition, we feature some local examples of recruiting differently and encourage you to share your Flexible Workplace initiatives with us. Keep an eye out for a quick and easy survey being circulated by SEBN, SEMMA and others who work in this space – the more responses we receive, the better we can understand and promote new ideas for others to consider adopting.

**Sandra George OAM**  
Manager SEBN

## Jayco builds the model for competitive recruitment

School mums and ambitious students are among Jayco Australia's recent recruits, with the caravan and motorhome manufacturer making national headlines for its innovative HR practices.

Jayco's General Manager Group HR, Donna Paxton, drove the flexible workplace model after the end of Victorian lockdowns in late 2021 saw huge demand for new recreational vehicles.

"For me it's a no brainer; why wouldn't you job share, especially in this competitive recruitment market?" Donna says.

"We initially pitched the four-hour shifts as the 10am-2pm time slot for women with kids in school, however, now when we advertise a part-time role we say, 'You tell us what you're looking for'.

"From a company perspective, you have two-part timers during the day and you get eight hours of full work.

We have gone from zero to 70 part-timers and half of them are mums. We also have students who work during the day and study at night and retirees."

The flexible working model is something Donna has wanted to implement for some time and says there are always learnings along the way.

"You need to have buy-in from senior management. Having specific hours in job advertisements is something we've changed to say there is flexibility between the hours of A and B."

Jayco Australia is still recruiting 10-15 people per week and Donna thinks this initiative would work for any business.

"Moving forward, this is the way the world is and having flexibility is so important."

**Learn more:**  
[jayco.com.au](http://jayco.com.au)



**GameChange**

[gamechange@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:gamechange@cgd.vic.gov.au)  
[greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/gamechange](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/gamechange)

## A little bit of magic



At the time of going to print, participants were looking forward to meeting the Mayor, Cr Eden Foster and CGD's new CEO, Jacqui Weatherill at this year's International Women's Day partnership event between SEBN and the Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce.

Keynote speaker at this Cocktail Lunch on Thursday 9 March at the iconic Drum Theatre, will be the fabulous Jordana Borensztajn who will help us all to 'Bring Magic into the Workplace', learning simple and

powerful techniques to step out of habitual thinking and activate imagination to collaborate and innovate with more productivity.



**TOGETHER**  
we connect  
engage  
and grow

Why not join one of the SEBN Network Groups or round tables including:

- Manufacturing Leadership
- Workplace Health & Safety
- South East Quality Network
- Manufacturing Xcellence
- Developing Leaders
- Waste | Sustainability
- CEO Mentoring Program
- Women In Business Network

Groups meet monthly and are open to all manufacturers across the region. For further information, contact [sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:sebn@cgd.vic.gov.au)

## Chobani employ Social Impact Manager

Local manufacturer Chobani have recently created a Social Impact Manager role, to ensure “social impact is always on the agenda”. We asked Chobani General Manager – Tim Browne, to tell us a little bit more about Chobani’s story and the job’s creation.

Since the role was created, a number of projects have been launched in conjunction with Foodbank Australia and the Schools Breakfast Club and the community has been very receptive. Chobani employees have rallied behind the projects and, relishing the additional opportunities to make a difference, coming together to deliver something special for the community.

**Read the full story:**  
[greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/news](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/news)

## Corporate Citizen of the Year works towards a brighter manufacturing future

“Manufacturing is changing and evolving,” says Peter Angelico, Corporate Citizen of the Year, whom Council recognised at its recent 2023 Australia Day Awards.

A passionate advocate for local manufacturing, Peter is the President of South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA) – a volunteer position – and the Founder and Managing Director of ABECK Group in Dandenong South, as well as a SEBN member.

With federal government funding and Peter at the helm, last year SEMMA launched a free Welding Skills Short Course to address a projected national shortage of 70,000 welders by 2030. SEMMA member, Hilton Manufacturing, first ran this course five years ago.

“SEMMA has now run the course twice and out of all the people who went through it, 92% found jobs and apprenticeships, providing long-term careers for all ages. We’re now working to get other registered training organisations (RTOs) and policy makers on board,” Peter explains.

“We need to get people into manufacturing from all walks of life and backgrounds and they can be trained. Advanced manufacturing has a huge future in Australia where small volumes, but high compliance and high quality are needed. Those most capable of change in our industry will survive.”

**Learn more:**  
[abeckgroup.com.au](http://abeckgroup.com.au)

## Supporting our future workforce

This is IT Schools (TIIS) is this year’s recipient from the 14th Take a Swing for Charity Golf Day held on 22 February. With a target in excess of \$40,000, more than 100 golfers enjoyed a warm day of fun, camaraderie – and competitiveness – at Victoria Golf Club followed by dinner and auction. With approximately \$600k raised over the years, this feature article is dedicated to the wonderful sponsors and supporters from the business community who are behind this hugely successful event.

Over the years, thousands within our community have been assisted with

material aid, school uniforms, increased health and wellbeing services, food security and many other items.

This is IT Schools, established by local businesses, donates repurposed laptops to secondary school students in Greater Dandenong and beyond as many students either share – or don’t have access – to their own device to support their education and learning. The TIIS mission to equalise access to education for all.

**Learn more:**  
[thisisitschools.com.au](http://thisisitschools.com.au)



**THIS IS IT**  
 EQUALISING EDUCATION THROUGH THE REPURPOSING OF LAPTOPS

# SEMMA appoints new CEO

Local manufacturing association, South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA) has announced the commencement of Honi Walker as the new Chief Executive Office (CEO). Honi will guide SEMMA in its mission to represent the interests of manufacturers and advocate on all issues impacting manufacturing in the local region.

Over the last 20 years, Honi has dedicated her career to business development, strategic relationship building and communications as well as co-owning a local manufacturing business. These skills will be invaluable in building SEMMA's new phase of membership growth and public awareness.

Honi's communication roles in the manufacturing sector include tenures at PPG Industries Australia Pty Ltd, Thiess Pty Ltd and Monsanto Australia Pty Ltd. Honi is experienced in Association management and culture. She has also served as the Industry Development Manager/ Executive Officer for APSAA (Asia



New SEMMA CEO Honi Walker.

Pacific Student Accommodation Association) and as the Public Affairs Manager for Plastics and Chemical Industries Association (PACIA).

Graduating from Deakin University with her Masters in Professional Communication, Honi has an outstanding history in education, also earning her Graduate Diploma of Public Relations from Deakin

University and an Associate Diploma of Business from Holmesglen TAFE.

"I am excited about continuing the great advocacy work to government for members and building our SEMMA membership. SEMMA is primed to begin a new phase of growth as we support our members to identify their capabilities enabling them to embrace new opportunities for manufacturing through innovation, technology, and industry networks," said Honi.

With her experience working with stakeholders and implementing strategy, Honi will help to move SEMMA forward in assisting our over 200 members and build SEMMA's public profile as the leading voice for manufacturing.

Council would like to acknowledge the former CEO, Vonda Fenwick for her contributions to SEMMA and wish her all the best for her future endeavours.

**Learn more:**  
[semma.com.au](http://semma.com.au)

## How can a Chamber of Commerce help businesses and business people?

The Greater Dandenong Chamber of Commerce has members ranging from the sole trader to the global brand – across all industries. The Chamber has been creating free resources for businesses, because we want businesses across the south east region of Melbourne to connect, grow and generate more opportunities.

### Useful articles

The Chamber regularly publishes helpful articles on topics of interest such as changes in business, new public policy levers such as changes issued by the Australian Taxation Office, self-care for businesses people and business partnerships issues to consider when change occurs.

### Webinars

We have a range of webinars available including webinars on the recent changes in legislation for businesses with 15 or more people, changes to Enterprise Bargaining, managing new flexible working arrangements requests and disclosure rules.

### Video tutorials to assist applying for business awards, grants and recognition.

Are you looking at applying for a business award? Or perhaps you're applying for a grant or other formal recognition for your business?

For business owners and business leaders, it's often the application process that takes the most time and resources. The Chamber has created

a set of videos to support your future applications for our own South East Business Award but also for other opportunities. The videos include question and answer style content and an assessment of the strength of the response from an assessor and some other helpful tips on what assessors look for in a successful application.

Refer to the Chamber's website under 'awards' and you'll find these videos.

**Learn more:**  
[greaterdandenongchamber.com.au](http://greaterdandenongchamber.com.au)



## Help your customers make a pit stop at your business

To attract people to your business and ideally come back for more, access to your business needs to be both convenient and safe.

### So, how can you, as a business, help your customers find a carpark?

- Encourage your staff to park in off-street areas, keeping the best parking spots available for your customers (even if it means your staff have to walk a little further)
- Encourage staff to take public transport, or walk or cycle to work if possible
- Share advice and information (for example on your social media or website) about parking for your customers to be aware of
- Keep an eye on Council's website for parking information and permit options that may assist your business
- Contact Council if you have any suggestions to improve parking

#### ▶ Dandenong

12,000 parking spaces. Council manage 3,500 of these spaces.

#### ▶ Noble Park

2,000 car parking spaces and Council manage all on-street parking (1,600 spaces).

#### ▶ Springvale

4,000 car parks available and Council manage 1,600 of these spaces.

### Learn more about car parking spaces in the Greater Dandenong Activity Centres: [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/parking](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/parking)

#### What is Council doing?

- Parking sensors have been installed in on-street parking spaces in Dandenong and Springvale Activity Centres to help promote turnover
- Parking restrictions are regularly reviewed and altered following consultation with businesses
- A variety of permit options for traders are available so that they do not need to take up spots which are needed by customers
- Council has worked with Car Share providers (GoGet) to provide a service for businesses that occasionally require a vehicle but do not want to purchase one

- Council is advocating for the Victorian Government to improve commuter parking at stations so that rail commuters (who do not contribute to the prosperity of the Activity Centres) do not take up spots that could be better used by customers or traders
- Council's staff Green Travel Plan is being updated and this will be made public so businesses can copy this to encourage their staff and customers to travel sustainably and be less reliant on private vehicles
- Improvements are being made to our streets to address safety and perceptions of safety through the Safer Streets Program
- Plans have been developed to roll out further Smart Parking Technology including real time parking information and signage
- Council have retained ownership of key sites within our Activity Centres so we can construct more parking in future, if it is needed.



## Reducing carbon footprint via carshare service

Hybrid working arrangements, the ongoing cost of living crisis, and restricted supply of new vehicles – the wake of the pandemic has generated a perfect storm for local businesses to reconsider their pool fleets. Since early 2020, local businesses have had access to a growing network of on-street carshare vehicles thanks to a collaboration between GoGet and Council. There are now over 75 business members across Greater Dandenong that have accrued over 530 business bookings since the local service became available.

How does carsharing work? Carsharing service providers, such as GoGet, own and operate a fleet of vehicles in convenient on-street and off-street locations throughout the community. This network allows members to drive a car for as long as they need one. This could be by the hour or by the day. With carsharing, you only pay for what you use and all the costs associated with car ownership are bundled into the rates (registration, servicing, fuel, insurance etc.).

Local Dandenong business Wayss, currently use the GoGet service, using two carshare vehicles located out the

front of their office. Wayss General Manager - Corporate Services, Bryan Madden said the GoGet service allows for a convenient and affordable overflow when the team occasionally need extra corporate cars.

“Wayss is very pleased to make use of the GoGet vehicles conveniently located close to our head office at 20 Princes Highway Dandenong. Wayss is the leading provider of family violence and homelessness services, and transitional housing in Southern Melbourne.” said Bryan.

**Learn more:**  
[goget.com.au/business](http://goget.com.au/business)

# GREATER DANDENONG FOOD AND CULTURAL TOURS



BOOK YOUR SEAT AT THE TABLE TODAY



Want a chance to experience delicious food, while learning about the culture behind the food? We offer an authentic food and cultural experience in either Dandenong or Springvale.



## TOUR TYPES:

- Afghan bazaar
- Little India
- Springvale Fresh
- Off the Menu



## DID YOU KNOW ?

we can organise group bookings for 8–16 people available upon request.

For more information and bookings visit [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/tours](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/tours) or phone 8571 1550

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