

16 August 2020

## MEDIA STATEMENT FOR PINNAROO BORDER TIMES



### **NEW BORDER RESTRICTIONS DEVASTATING FOR DISTRICT**

#### **Question from Pinnaroo Border Times:**

*"I wondered if you, as Mayor, would like to make any comment, or send in a letter, on the effect of the latest COVID restrictions on Pinnaroo and Lameroo."*

#### **Response from SMDC Mayor Andrew Grieger:**

While I realise the State Government has to make difficult decisions, based on the best advice it can get, the new border restrictions announced are absolutely devastating for our communities.

The impact these new restrictions will have on families, businesses, clubs, individuals' wellbeing and our long-term economy are only just beginning to be seen.

Council's priority during the pandemic has always been to protect the health and safety of our residents – and we will continue to do this. And while we will continue to support the measures put in place by the State Government – **we will also advocate for our community's best interest, and this includes our cross-border neighbours who own businesses, go to school, work, do business and are part of our local communities.**

We know that COVID-19 cases are still growing in Victoria and the situation for their State is simply heartbreaking. I can absolutely understand why the State Government wants to protect its borders and prevent the spread into SA. However, as a Council, we want to support all Australian citizens - whether Victorian/South Australian, or a Murrayville or Pinnaroo resident, and in whatever capacity we can.

Our Council is listening to local concerns, and we're making it a priority to advocate for them with SAPOL, SA Health and the relevant officers and Ministers.

Through our acting CEO, Council is working with the Local Government Functional Support Group (LGFSG) who did some terrific work as incident responders during the bushfire season and are now supporting councils through the pandemic. The LGFSG have direct links to SAPOL and SA Health and are establishing an Area Liaison Officer role specific to the issues for border councils in an effort to work together and look at options to support our cross-border families and businesses. What we're hoping for now, through working with other similar border communities, is that we can find some solutions for local families and businesses, and will advise the community as soon as anything comes to light on this.

Importantly, I believe Mallee people are some of the most resilient and resourceful people in the country. We have been through some tough times over the decades and this may well prove to be the hardest yet, but I have no doubt that by working together, we can come out even stronger.

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