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MEDIA RELEASE

SOUTHERN MALLEE STRENGTHENS TIES WITH MALLEE HEALTH COUNCIL

Southern Mallee District Council is strengthening its ties with the region's key health services with a Council representative to be appointed to the region's health advisory council for the first time in many years.

The Southern Mallee Elected Members have nominated and endorsed Councillor Jeff Nickolls to represent Council on the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council (MHSAC), with Councillor Mick Sparnon nominated as a proxy to represent Council.

This nomination follows Council's increased focus on improving community wellbeing, and its desire to be more involved in helping to shape key decisions on local health services to ensure the best outcomes are being delivered for the district.

The Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council plays a critical role in liaising with the local community on health and wellbeing issues and uses this feedback to help improve care delivered through the Pinnaroo, Lameroo and Karoonda hospitals and other associated health services.

Southern Mallee Chief Executive Officer Jason Taylor thanked MHSAC Presiding Member Rob Berlin for taking a proactive approach to working with Council and requesting a representative.

Southern Mallee District Council's aim is to build healthy communities with good access to services, meaning it already has much in common with the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council.

"We welcome the regional health council's approach to work more collaboratively on shared issues in the area of public health and wellbeing," Mr Taylor says.

"Our Council recognises the challenges rural areas such as ours face in the areas of community health and we're committed to working actively to address these. Changing lifestyles, the ongoing drought, isolation and difficulty accessing health and recreation services can all impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of our rural residents.

"This new connection with the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council is a way for Council to further extend its commitment to the Southern Mallee community to work proactively to improve access to the services and facilities they need to live a healthy and happy life.

"It also complements our ongoing work into projects such as investment into open space and passive recreation opportunities - which will ultimately help increase opportunities for physical activity.

"This is on top of our continued support for local sporting clubs, which play a huge role in building healthy, socially-connected and resilient communities."

Cr Nickolls will now wait to be endorsed by the State Government before beginning his role on the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council in the coming months.

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