

Open Letter



The Barossa Council

30 March 2020

Open Letter to the Barossa community

We are living in uncertain times. We know many in our community are making difficult choices as they come to terms with COVID19 and the far reaching impacts on our lifestyle, livelihood and community interactions. The announcements over the weekend have highlighted the need to follow the advice of our health authority <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/>. At this time our thoughts are especially with those who are impacted.

But we are a resilient and resourceful community, a compassionate community, and no-one is better placed than the Barossa to face these challenges.

As we leave behind accepted social norms and traditional ways of doing business, I see many examples of creative thinking and adaptability, of people finding innovative solutions and new opportunities in the face of challenge. As we rise to these challenges I encourage everyone to "Support Local. Love Barossa" by getting behind our local businesses and food producers.

I want to assure our community that as a Council we also continue to move forward, within the parameters set by decision-makers, to keep our community strong and forward-looking. At our special Council meeting last week, we introduced hardship provisions including deferring all rates and charges due this financial year for a period of six months. We also waived lease and licence fees for 12 months to support the many community clubs, groups and organisations that use Council facilities for their operations.

We remain committed to major projects, including those that are part of The Big Project, and continue to seek funding options for shovel-ready projects.

We are also working with stakeholder partners like Tourism Barossa and Barossa Grape and Wine to give our food, wine and tourism sectors a solid platform for recovery. A coordinated and planned approach is our best defence to buffer the impacts of COVID19. Recovery plans to support economic and social rebuilding are underway.

We all have a part to play in this rebuilding effort. This may be as simple as having empathy for others as we navigate this uncharted territory together. We know job losses, economic downturn and social change can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing, especially mental health. Please, continue to reach out to others. Ask, are you ok? Above all, practice kindness, to yourself and others. It costs nothing, but can mean everything.

Sincerely,

Mayor Bim Lange
The Barossa Council



premium wine food tourism heritage lifestyle community