



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Government and local businesses come together to discuss the way forward

Leading Geelong organisations will facilitate a Forum for local Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) operators to speak directly to representatives from all levels of government about their experiences and ongoing challenges in navigating lockdowns.

The Committee for Geelong along with the Geelong Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine will host the invite-only forum this Thursday 9 September.

Insights from those affected operators will be on the agenda alongside discussions about current government supports, the response so far and planning a way forward to rebuild confidence: from consumers and, in turn, give businesses in the SME sector the assurances they need when planning to invest and employ.

Hearing directly from affected businesses about the impacts and issues, as well as what they see as the critical considerations from this point forward, will prove valuable to the planning process.

The forum will be facilitated by the partnering organisations in an honest but constructive way, with a view to improved outcomes for the business community from this point forward.

Quote attributable to Committee for Geelong CEO, Jennifer Cromarty:

“Geelong is a resilient community, but for businesses to successfully navigate the immediate future it will take a local commitment to collaborate along with targeted Government support. It’s critical there is a direct line from SME businesses to government to ensure action is effective and includes impacts on our CBD, and we’re pleased to be able to facilitate that connection.”

Quote attributable to Geelong Chamber of Commerce CEO Ben Flynn:

“Small and medium sized businesses have borne the brunt of the lockdown impacts. For their ongoing sustainability and for the growth of our local economy, their specific needs and concerns need to be understood and addressed.”

Quote attributable to Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine Executive Director, Brett Ince:

“The tourism industry has been decimated by the lockdowns. This is an important opportunity for governments to hear direct from those impacted about their experiences, and what they need in future in order to rebuild and strengthen their businesses and the regional visitor economy.”

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