



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Mayoral Drought Update. Mayor, Cr Reid Mather

### Support Your Local Business

It is important for all of us to recognise the impact of this very difficult season on all of our businesses in the shire. Council would like to remind residents that “Buying Local” and supporting local business is even more important this year. The difficult season will almost certainly result in less money to spend, therefore it becomes even more important to ensure that our local businesses receive a large proportion of your support this season.

“Council plans to hold a series of business workshops in conjunction with Small Business Victoria, beginning in February and will continue to advocate for our local businesses to state and federal governments at every opportunity.” Said Mayor, Cr Reid Mather recently. “ CEO, John Hicks, and I met recently with Minister Pulford and highlighted the need to recognise the role of rural urban businesses and their importance in maintaining liveable communities here in Victoria.”

Council, the Birchip Cropping Group and the National Centre for Farmer Health are working to extend an opportunity provided to Birchip businesses to more workshops in other towns. The workshops are designed to assist staff to deal with customers under stress and to explore opportunities to manage financial issues that may have arisen as a result of current climatic conditions.

The workshops will assist businesses in identifying signs that customers may be under stress and then workshop business solutions on how to manage these customers. A focus of the workshops is the networking and conversations regarding the challenges involved and the role staff find themselves playing. These conversations can lead to a different approach with better outcomes for both customers and the businesses.

Christmas can be a stressful and equally difficult for consumers and businesses alike, however shopping with local businesses provides direct benefits to the whole community.

Shopping locally;

- Promotes the viability of local businesses
- Supporting local businesses owners who live in the community will enhance our communities
- Keeps your neighbours and mates in a job
- Develops personal relationships and local businesses can stock for individual people
- Sees local businesses spend most of the money you give them with other local businesses
- Makes local shops accessible to everyone (the elderly don't have to find a driver to take them away to shop)
- Is environmentally friendly as it reduces the distance you travel
- Underpins the viability and future of sporting groups through sponsorship
- Turns one dollar spent locally into three dollars before it is gone out of town.

**End release**

**For further information contact Travis Fitzgibbon on 1300 520 520**