

## **Tosh-Jake Finnigan's message to Colac & district businesses**

Businesses across the Colac Otway Shire are in the midst of an unprecedented downturn through no fault of their own, and the next council will need to put aside any personal or political differences so we can chart a way back from this recession.

If elected to the Colac Otway Shire Council, I pledge to work with each and every councillor, regardless of their political position or personal opinion of me in order to get the best results for our shire coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Being the owner of a new small business in Colac, I have my own ideas around relaxing restrictions on signage and cutting red-tape that obstructs businesses from operating at their best and from growing. I also believe that the incoming council will need to look heavily at rate relief for businesses as there just isn't going to be enough money to go around, and a rate rise at this time could be the final nail in the coffin for some.

Sadly, we may not be able to rely on the usual tourism boon to save us as the Colac Otway Shire will be competing with the rest of regional Victoria for tourist dollars once restrictions in Melbourne lift. Without a comprehensive and attractive marketing campaign showcasing what our region has to offer, we won't see the same economic benefits from tourism as other municipalities which are taking this route.

In addition to the above, I would meet with other businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to listen to what they think is needed to help businesses through the current crisis.