



## Chairperson Report Business Victor Harbor 2019 – 2020

It has been an honour serving as Board Chair since January 2020, a year remembered for the social and economic devastation caused by the COVID 19 Pandemic.

As the leading business chamber of commerce in the region, the BVH Board pivoted in the wake of the pandemic. Our immediate focus has been to help businesses become resilient, adaptive and recover via a mix of tools and supports, to help our local economy emerge stronger than ever.

Listening to you, our members' feedback of the evolving effects of COVID on their business - we moved to forge an historic collaborative relationship with the City of Victor Harbor & Business SA ensuring local businesses received targeted support when they needed it the most.

As a business community, we thank the City of Victor for their genuine concern, rapid response, and significant actions to help the local economy. This has included rate relief, business support grants program (\$250,000), and allocating funding for BVH to provide targeted local business support (\$120,000 over two financial years) and \$24,000 to support a proposal for Business SA to provide business advisory services.

With a sense of urgency between May and July, we worked closely with Business SA to have 'feet on the ground' – resulting in a total of 91 businesses visited, 196 supporting follow up actions and 52 new memberships with Business SA, in addition to all existing BVH members obtaining full Business SA membership and support. BVH has also seen our membership base increase by 47% over the past 12 months.

From August, BVH has been able to provide further support to the business community with the engagement of a Business Support Executive - Renee Ancell – with funding by the City of Victor Harbor. This has extended BVH's ability to reach out to members and the business community helping to direct them to support programs, information & tools they needed to navigate their way through these uncertain times.

In addition, a number of workshops and seminars in conjunction with Business SA, Tafe SA & Alexandrina Council have come to fruition.

Looking to the future, the Board finalised our strategic business plan. It's an ambitious plan targeted to deliver a range of projects and outcomes, both aligned with member priorities and our strategic focus of 'A vibrant, sustainable, & diverse economy'.

With the access to partial funding from the differential rate paid by the business community each year, the Board has been able to move to appoint an interim Executive Officer to ensure these strategies are quickly and effectively transformed into action. We are delighted to have attracted and secured the services of Derek McIlroy to role – who has hit the road running.

In continuing to advocate and influence economic policy, the BVH Board has actively worked with the City of Victor Harbor in the development of the Community's Economic Development Strategy.



I am delighted to advise BVH's working paper "Reimagining Victor Harbor's Economy" and roadmap released earlier this year, was influential in much of the development of this Strategy.

As a business community, we look forward to the celebrations of the Business Awards around November each year. A wonderful event attended by over 200 business leaders and held in recent times at the McCracken Convention Centre. Unfortunately like many events due to COVID-19 restrictions this could not be run this year. We look forward to relaunching this program in 2021.

I would like to thank Business Victor Harbor's Board and staff for the ongoing strategic leadership and guidance in continuing to support and promote Victor Harbor businesses and our region as a great place to do business.

I would especially like to acknowledge the leadership and guidance of Nick Gormley, for 8 years on the Board and 6 years as Chairperson.

Finally, I thank all members for their continued membership and support. With our 21 year history and established networks, Business Victor Harbor is well placed to continue and thrive in its role as the most influential voice of business in Victor Harbor in the year ahead, and many years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "mschubert", written in a cursive style.

**Michael Schubert**  
Chairperson 2019/2020  
Business Victor Harbor