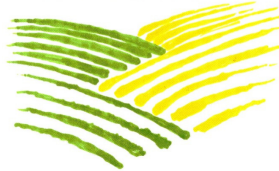


SOUTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL



A “New Life” for the Former Levendale Primary School

With the closure of the Levendale Primary school in December 2013 an opportunity for the Community to retain the school as an important focus of activity and enterprise has arisen.

There may be an opportunity for the Department of Education to transfer the buildings/grounds to the Southern Midlands Council, if a sustainable Community based use can be found for the site. Unfortunately the Department is not permitted to vest property to a Community based organisations other than a Council.

In discussion with local residents in late 2013, it was acknowledged that the site could lend itself to a number of co-located activities and there was a clear indication from the Levendale residents that the school site and buildings should be retained as a Community resource.

Southern Midlands Council is extremely supportive of the efforts of the Community in exploring and developing activities at the Levendale School site, however it is mindful of the financial and physical implications of taking on additional significant property based assets. Any use of the site by the Community needs to be based on sound business and asset management principles, underpinned by the identification of significant Community support as well as projected sustainability.

In order to assess the viability and sustainability of such a project it is necessary to engage a skilled and practiced professional to undertake the analysis, then develop a robust business case. Without such an assessment it will be extremely difficult to progress any plans for Community ownership of the site. Both Southern Midlands Council and the former State Government, through the Department of Premier & Cabinet via Rebecca White MP and the former Member for Lyons, Michael Polley, have provided funding for the engagement of a suitably qualified consultant to undertake this important project. As such, Southern Midlands Council has commissioned SGS Economics and Planning to undertake a rigorous process to assist in developing a tangible business plan / structure that articulates the viability and sustainability of any not for profit social enterprise that could be the hub of the school site’s future.

The first step of this exciting development is to create of an extensive list of enterprise ideas through a facilitated brainstorming process conducted by Elle Witte, from SGS Economics and Planning. This will involve Community members and other interested stakeholders on Saturday 10th May 2014 at the School site in Levendale. We therefore invite as many Community members as possible to take part in this forum. This is the Community’s opportunity to contribute their thoughts to the pool of enterprise ideas waiting to be explored for revitalisation of the site. I have taken the opportunity of attaching information about the session.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Benson
Acting General Manager

23rd April 2014