

ITEM 8 AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE AND CITY OF WOLLONGONG AWARDS

The Australia Day Committee has been involved in the organisation of community activities on 26 January for many years. Over recent years the format of Australia Day has changed, becoming shorter with the focus shifting to greater cultural awareness. In addition, in 2022/23 Council moved from the Australia Day Awards to the City of Wollongong Awards in order to provide more inclusive recognition of all individuals and organisations. This report further modernises Council's approach and reflects recent changes.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council endorse the proposal to revoke the Australia Day Committee Charter.
- 2 Council endorse the proposal to form a community committee to support the functioning of the City of Wollongong Awards.
- 3 Council endorse the inclusion of the current Australia Day Committee members at the next Lord Mayor's Recognition Reception, to thank them for their input and community service.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Culture + Engagement
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Australia Day Committee Charter
- 2 Draft City of Wollongong Awards Committee Charter

BACKGROUND

Wollongong City Council's Australia Day celebrations have comprised three major components:

1. Australia Day Citizenship
2. Australia Day Awards
3. Australia Day Community Event.

Citizenship – In 2022 the federal government changed the law to allow councils to conduct citizenship ceremonies in the three days before or after Australia Day, instead of requiring a citizenship ceremony on Australia Day. To date, Wollongong City Council has continued to hold a citizenship ceremony on Australia Day.

Awards – In 2024 Wollongong City Council de-coupled the Australia Day Awards from Australia Day. The Awards are now called the City of Wollongong Awards. This step was to make the awards more inclusive and a true recognition of all the individuals and organisations who make Wollongong a better place. A new structure, separate to the Australia Day Committee, is required to manage these awards.

Event – Over many years Wollongong City Council has organised a full day of activities on Australia Day. This started with the Australia Day Aquathon, which runs in the harbour area, across the morning. The main community event commenced from 12pm and ran into the evening, ending after a 9pm fireworks display.

Up until now this event and the Australia Day Awards have been supported by the Australia Day Committee.

Over the past two years, Council has downsized the event. This included changing the start time of the Council organised component of the event from 12pm (immediately after the Aquathon) to 5pm. This was in response to the often hot conditions across the middle of the day and early afternoon. It also reflects community visitation patterns to the event, with crowds building across the early evening until the fireworks.

In addition to this, Council is working to shift the focus of the event to offer activities which are more culturally appropriate, acknowledging that for many, this day represents a day of sadness, mourning and a reminder of colonisation.

In 2024 this led to the removal of mechanical rides, the rescheduling of the Gun Battery March to another time of year and the inclusion of Aboriginal Art workshops in the program for the evening.

It is proposed that Council will continue to organise a culturally appropriate community event on 26 January each year, without the need for a specific Australia Day Committee, instead referring questions of cultural appropriateness to the Aboriginal Reference Group and/or other key agencies.

The formation of a City of Wollongong Awards Committee would support the awards moving forward.

PROPOSAL

Council endorse the proposal to revoke the Australia Day Committee Charter and endorse draft City of Wollongong Committee Charter be presented to Council for adoption.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Community Engagement

Events

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 4 – ‘We are a connected and engaged community’. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
4.4	Build awareness and understanding of Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, heritage and histories	Community Programs

RISK MANAGEMENT

The question of how communities mark Australia Day is a challenged one within the community. This proposal may raise mixed sentiments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These activities are within the allocated annual budget and require no additional funding.

CONCLUSION

This report follows a pilot last year to ensure Wollongong City Council's Australia Day activities were more culturally appropriate. This included ensuring activities on the day include opportunity for local indigenous storytelling (as achieved in 2024 through art workshops at the event).

CHARTER

AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON 27 June 2022

Doc Set ID: 22060939

1 INTRODUCTION

The Australia Day Committee has been established to provide community input into Wollongong City Council's organisation of an annual Australia Day community event and to determine the Australia Day award recipients. The Australia Day Committee comprises people interested in furthering these aims.

2 AUTHORITY

The Australia Day Committee will provide advice, feedback and support to Council in developing, implementing and monitoring strategies which relate to the creation of a safe and inclusive Australia Day community event and the Australia Day awards program.

The Australia Day Committee does not have decision making authority, the power to bind the Council, nor the power to incur expenditure.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The responsibilities and functions of the Australia Day Committee are to -

- Provide a forum for discussion to help guide the strategic direction of the Australia Day community event and Australia Day awards;
- When required, form sub-committees to provide strategic direction of the Australia Day community event and Australia Day awards;
- Determining and fulfilling the process for deciding the winners of the various categories of the Australia Day awards; and
- Consider the cumulative effects of Council's decisions on the Australia Day community event and Australia Day awards.

4 PRIORITIES

The immediate priority of the Australia Day Committee is to provide strategic direction and guidance for the organisation of the annual Australia Day community event and to determine the Australia Day awards recipients.

Other priorities will be determined by the Australia Day Committee from time to time.

5 COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Australia Day Committee is to be made up of:

- Lord Mayor (Chairperson);
- Councillor representative;
- Australia Day Council representative;
- Up to ten community representatives including two youth representatives (aged under 26 years), a culturally and linguistically diverse community (CALD) representative; and
- Current Australia Day Award Winners.

The Chairperson will be the Lord Mayor. A community representative to be elected Deputy Chair.

Vacancies that occur on the Australia Day Committee can be filled by public advertisement, invitation by the Australia Day Committee, self nomination. The Australia Day Committee will vote to confirm new Committee members.

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Council's Manager Community, Cultural and Economic Development or delegate will attend Australia Day Committee meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Australia Day Committee. Other Council staff, Government officers, advisors or individuals may be invited to attend meetings from time to time to provide expert advice, information or presentations in relation to the Australia Day Committee business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

6 TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Term of appointment is to be for a period of two years for community representatives. Committee members are welcomed to re-nominated after each term of appointment.

Councillors will remain on the Committee for the term of Council.

7 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

Members of the Australia Day Committee, in performing their duties, shall:

- Act honestly and in good faith;
- Participate in the work of the Australia Day Committee;
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Australia Day Committee;
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person;
- Comply with the Australia Day Committee Charter; and
- Comply with Council's Codes of Conduct.

8 MEETINGS

Meetings will be held monthly, except where no business has been identified.

A quorum will consist of half of the committee plus one member.

Meetings will be chaired by the Council appointed chairperson. If the chairperson is absent from a meeting, the deputy chairperson will chair the meeting.

The Australia Day Committee has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, advice from the Australia Day Committee may be presented with supporting and dissenting views of Australia Day Committee members.

Meeting agendas will be distributed prior to the meeting.

9 REPORTING

The minutes of meetings will be made available to Councillors and Council's Executive Management for information. Minutes will also be distributed to all members.

Advice and decisions of the Australia Day Committee relating to specific Council projects will be reported to Council as part of the project reporting process.

Any matters arising that require a separate decision of Council may be reported to Council at the discretion of the Manager Community, Cultural and Economic Development.

CHARTER

AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON 27 June 2022

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10 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A review of the Australia Day Committee Charter will be undertaken every four years to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Australia Day Committee is effective and to make appropriate changes as required. The Australia Day Committee are to review and endorse the proposed changes prior to the request for adoption through Council.

CHARTER

AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON 27 June 2022

Doc Set ID: 22060939

SUMMARY SHEET		
Responsible Division	Community Cultural and Economic Development	
Date last adopted	Date	Adopted/Endorsed by
	27 June 2022	
Date of previous adoptions:		

CHARTER

CITY OF WOLLONGONG AWARDS COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON

1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Wollongong Awards Committee has been established to ensure the delivery of a program of awards to acknowledge the people and organisations who make Wollongong a better place. The Committee will provide community input and guidance into the operations and judging of the annual City of Wollongong Awards.

2 AUTHORITY

The City of Wollongong Awards Committee will provide advice, feedback and support into the categories included each year in the City of Wollongong Awards, approaches to the community to elicit nominations and have the responsibility for judging the awards program.

The City of Wollongong Awards Committee does not have the power to bind Council, nor the power to incur expenditure.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The responsibilities and functions of the City of Wollongong Awards Committee are to:

- Provide a forum for discussion to help guide the inclusion (or exclusion) of categories in the City of Wollongong Awards and determine judging criteria
- Determining and fulfilling the process for deciding the winners of the various categories of the City of Wollongong Awards
- Where desirable create working groups to further the seeking of nominations or to support the delivery of the presentation event for the City of Wollongong Awards.

4 PRIORITIES

The immediate priority of the City of Wollongong Awards Committee is to provide strategic direction and guidance for the organisation on the awards and to determine the award recipients.

5 COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Australia Day Committee is to be made up of up to 11 people.

- Lord Mayor (Chairperson)
- Councillor representative
- Current Wollongong Citizen of the Year; Senior Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year
- One representative from the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra
- One representative from either the Aboriginal Reference Group or the Illawarra Land Council
- Four community representatives representing diverse backgrounds, interests and community involvement.

The Chairperson will be the Lord Mayor. A community representative to be elected Deputy Chair.

Vacancies that occur for the community roles on the City of Wollongong Awards Committee can be filled by public advertisement, invitation by the Committee, or self-nomination. The City of Wollongong Awards Committee will vote to confirm new community Committee members.

Council's Manager Community, Culture + Engagement or delegate will attend City of Wollongong Awards Committee meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Committee. Other Council staff, government officers, advisors or individuals may be invited to attend meetings from time to time to provide expert advice, information or presentations in relation to the City of Wollongong Awards Committee business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

CHARTER

CITY OF WOLLONGONG AWARDS COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON

6 TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Term of appointment is a period of two years for community representatives and one year for current City of Wollongong Award winners. Committee members are welcomed to re-nominate after each term of appointment.

Councillors will remain on the Committee for the term of Council.

7 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

In performing their duties, Members of the City of Wollongong Awards Committee shall:

- Act honestly and in good faith
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the City of Wollongong Awards Committee
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person
- Comply with the City of Wollongong Awards Committee Charter
- Comply with Council's Codes of Conduct which includes advising the Chair of all potential conflicts of interest.

8 MEETINGS

Meetings will be held monthly, except where no business has been identified.

A quorum will consist of nine.

Meetings will be chaired by the Council appointed chairperson. If the chairperson is absent from a meeting, the deputy chairperson will chair the meeting.

The City of Wollongong Awards Committee has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, the Chair will hold the deciding vote.

Meeting agendas will be distributed prior to the meeting.

9 REPORTING

The minutes of meetings will be distributed to all members.

Any matters arising that require a separate decision of Council may be reported to Council at the discretion of the Manager Community, Culture + Engagement.

10 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A review of the City of Wollongong Awards Charter will be undertaken every four years to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the City of Wollongong Awards Committee is effective and to make appropriate changes as required. Proposed changes are to be put before Council for final determination.

CHARTER

CITY OF WOLLONGONG AWARDS COMMITTEE



CHARTER ADOPTED ON

SUMMARY SHEET		
Responsible Division	Community, Culture + Engagement	
Date last adopted	Date	Adopted/Endorsed by
		Council
Date of previous adoptions:		