

Media Release



Wednesday 9 September 2026

Adelaide Hills Council resolves to amend its position regarding events on 26 January

During the Tuesday 8 September council meeting, the Adelaide Hills Council resolved to amend its position regarding events on 26 January.

The full motion is included at the end of this statement. In summary, it empowers the Council to provide a Community Grant program to support community events on or around the 26 January. The Council will also hold its Citizenship and Civic Awards Ceremony on 26 January.

The motion also requires the administration to undertake respectful and culturally appropriate engagement with First Nations peoples, relevant cultural authorities and stakeholders, and the community.

The following quotes are attributable to Mayor Nathan Daniell:

I want to acknowledge this is a sensitive issue, and I recognise there are deeply held and differing views across our community.

I supported Council's decision back in 2023 and did so because I believed it was a respectful response to the concerns that had been raised, particularly by First Nations people.

But leadership also requires us to reflect on the decisions we make, to learn from their implementation, and to be prepared to adjust our approach as we learn from experience and hear from our community.

There are many people in our community for whom 26 January is an important day of celebration, citizenship and connection. Equally, for many First Nations people it is a day associated with loss, dispossession and reflection. These varying perspectives are real and recognising one should not require us to dismiss the other.

This decision preserves choice. Those who would prefer to receive their citizenship or civic award on another day will continue to have that opportunity. This is an important part of ensuring our approach remains inclusive and respectful of those differing perspectives.

We now have the opportunity to work more closely with our community about how events are held, while also committing Council to respectful and culturally appropriate engagement with First Nations people.

Media Release



It is important we take this opportunity to be driven not by political positioning, but rather by respect, inclusion and a genuine desire to bring our community together.

Motion in full

1. That Agenda Item 12.1 Australia Day Events Review Report be received and noted.
2. To rescind Limb 2 and Limb 3 of [Council Resolution 195/23 of 25 July 2023](#), being:

Limb 2: To not conduct Citizenship Ceremonies, confer awards or support events on 26 January from this date onwards in recognition of the difficulties of the 26 January for First Nations Peoples; and

Limb 3: That the CEO find alternative dates and opportunities in consultation with local groups for award and citizenship ceremonies (acknowledging that a Citizenship Ceremony must still be conducted within 3 days either side of 26 January).

3. To reaffirm Council's commitment to reconciliation, First Nations recognition, inclusivity, and community connection.
4. To establish a dedicated 26 January Community Event Grant Program from 2027 for eligible local community and not-for-profit organisations holding events on or around 26 January, with an annual funding pool of up to \$7,500 and a maximum grant of \$1,500 to any one organisation for any one event, subject to annual budget provision.
5. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to prepare grant guidelines and administer the program pursuant to Council's Grant Giving Policy, with assessment criteria including alignment with *Council's Strategic Plan 2024 – Your Place, Your Space*, the capacity to deliver the event, and one or more of the following:
 - a. Community connection and participation;
 - b. Community benefit;
 - c. Civic pride;
 - d. Australian heritage and history;
 - e. Reconciliation; and
 - f. Local identity.
6. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to commence the grant application process as a matter of priority, with recommendations presented to Council by November 2026 to enable successful community groups to plan and deliver events on, or around, 26 January 2027.

Media Release



7. To note that community groups will be eligible to receive event support per the Festivals and Events Policy for events held on 26 January, subject to available resources and operational capacity, and any additional funding required for the program in the 2026–27 financial year be considered at the next available budget review.
8. That from 2027 onwards, Council will conduct a Citizenship and Civic Awards Ceremony on 26 January, while continuing to provide citizenship ceremony opportunities on other dates throughout the year for eligible conferees who prefer an alternative date;
9. That Civic Award recipients be given the choice to receive their award either at the Council ceremony on 26 January, at an appropriate local community event on or around 26 January, or on another suitable date; and
10. That where a Civic Award is presented at a local community event, an Elected Member may present the award as a representative of Council, subject to the Mayor's delegation.
11. That the Chief Executive Officer undertakes respectful and culturally appropriate engagement with First Nations peoples, relevant cultural authorities and stakeholders, and the community for the purpose of providing a report to Council on opportunities to better incorporate:
 - a. Reconciliation,
 - b. First Nations' history,
 - c. and Cultural perspectivesinto Council activities associated with 26 January, including Citizenship Ceremonies, Civic Awards and Council-supported community events, with sufficient time allowed to enable meaningful outcomes to guide Council.
12. That the focus of this engagement is the appropriate incorporation of Reconciliation and First Nations' history into Council's future activities associated with 26 January, rather than the reconsideration of whether Council conducts or supports activities on or around 26 January.

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