



# Dates and Occasions of Celebration and Significance Policy

## Purpose

This policy aims to provide a clear process and supporting framework to guide Council's strategic approach to dates and occasions of significance.

Prioritisation of dates and occasions of significance via a tiered approach and assessment framework allows for the recognition of our diverse community, ensures a strategic approach to Council's investment and enables the appropriate allocation of resources to achieve the best outcomes for the community.

## Governance Principles

Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)* specifies the overarching governance principles and supporting principles that Council must adhere to in the performance of its role and functions.

This policy gives effect to the following overarching governance principles outlined in Section 9(2) of the Act:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, will be promoted;
- The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;
- Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies will be sought;
- The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in making strategic planning and decision making; and
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information will be ensured.

This policy also takes into account the following supporting principles defined in Section 9(3) of the Act:

- The community engagement principles (Community Engagement Policy);
- The public transparency principles (Public Transparency Policy);
- The strategic planning principles;
- The financial management principles; and
- The service performance principles.

## Related policies and documents

- Council Plan 2021-2025 / Annual Review 2023-2024
- Baw Baw Shire Community Vision
- Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2022-2025
- Creative Communities Strategy 2023-2029
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Digital Platform Strategy 2024 – 2026 Facebook and Instagram
- ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day Ceremonies Policy
- Gender and Equity Impact Assessment – Dates and Occasions of Celebration and Significance Policy

## Background

Baw Baw Shire's flourishing population presents many opportunities to shape a sustainable, healthy, and thriving region now and into the future. Changes in our community demographics include but are not limited to, ancestry, religious beliefs, education, and health.

Ensuring our new residents develop a sense of pride of place and connection to the community is imperative. The liveability of a region is crucial to encourage investment, increase the local workforce and increase community well-being. Dates and occasions of significance are a key avenue for Council to support these outcomes.

This Policy offers the opportunity for Council to consider how to commemorate dates and occasions that are significant and recognise the people that make up Baw Baw Shire.

Council currently celebrates a wide range of dates and occasions associated with:

- Religion and culture,
- Community and environmental well-being, and
- Historical and social significance.

## Scope

This policy applies to Councillors, Council Officers, community organisations, community members, businesses, associations, and government agencies seeking to propose a new initiative to acknowledge and/or celebrate certain dates and occasions of celebration and significance and seeking Council support therefor.

This policy will be used to review the existing dates and occasions of significance and to determine an annual calendar of initiatives for Council to support by applying a supporting framework and tiered approach.

Council will continue to encourage and support our community to develop, facilitate and lead community events that allow the community to connect, celebrate and foster local pride. Community led events are an important part of Baw Baw Shire and allow community to take ownership of the creation of healthy, thriving and sustainable communities.

## Policy detail

### Tiered Approach

A tiered approach to the level of investment (staffing and financial) and assessment framework will be applied to proposed initiatives. This approach ensures that dates and occasions are selected in a transparent and inclusive way and that the number of dates and occasions supported reflect the resourcing available and the importance to the community.

### Tier One

Tier One events would include those events that are of national or state significance and align with Council's strategic priorities and values and legislated events, such as Citizenship Ceremonies. Council support may typically include, in line with relevant Council policies and strategies and resources available:

- Allocated financial support of more than \$5,000
- Hosting or facilitating a community event or program of events
- Investment of extensive planning and delivery resources (over 400 hours of officer time)
- Part of a department's annual service delivery program
- Significant communications support including media release, advertising, photography, Mayor and Councillor support (e.g. MC'ing or officially opening an event) and internal communications support.

## Tier Two

Council's support for a Tier Two event may include, in line with relevant Council policies and strategies and resources available:

- Allocation of a budget of up to \$5,000
- Up to 400 hours of officer time for the planning and delivery of an event or program
- Moderate communications support and moderate Mayor and Councillor support (e.g. officially open an event, raise a flag) as appropriate.

## Tier Three

Council's support for a Tier Three event could include promotion via its available channels, such as social media, relevant newsletter or EDM (electronic direct marketing) and/or website or if applicable, the lighting up of relevant Council facilities such as the West Gippsland Arts Centre in line with relevant Council policies and strategies and resources available.

## Tier Four

No direct Council involvement is provided. Submitters are provided with options for consideration, including hosting a community event and applying for funding via available funding bodies, including Council's Community Development Grants Program.

The **Assessment Framework – Dates and Occasions of Celebration and Significance** sets out detailed criteria for each tier and the assessment matrix applied.

## Calendar of Dates and Occasions of Significance

Any new proposals will be included in the Calendar of Dates and Occasions of Significance and submitted to the Executive Leadership Team for endorsement based on the principles of this policy in September each year, with events endorsed by Council resolution at a meeting of Council.

## Consideration of Additional Events – Assessment Process

For consideration of any events above the approved Calendar of Dates and Occasions of Significance the following process will apply:

- New proposals may be submitted to Council throughout the year by completing the *Dates and Occasions of Celebration and Significance Form* online at [www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au). Submissions close the last Friday of July each year and

will be reviewed and assessed between the first Monday of August and the last Friday of August each year (“Assessment Period”).

- Dates and occasions will be assessed by applying the Assessment Framework – Dates and Occasions of Celebration and Significance. Dates and occasions will be scored by an assessment panel against a set of criteria with a final total score determining the tier.
- Submissions will be assessed by a panel convened by Council Officers and recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Leadership Team for endorsement in September, with events formally endorsed through Council Meeting.
- Officers will notify the submitter of the outcome within thirty (30) days following endorsement.
- Support of successful dates and occasions of significance will be implemented in the following financial year.

#### Consideration of existing Dates and Occasions of Significance

- If an existing event is proposed to be changed from a lower tier to a higher tier or vice versa, a new proposal must be submitted in line with the above submission process.

#### Consideration of New Dates and Occasions of Significance

- If the assessment panel supports a proposal as reflected by the final score, but the current staff resources and budget are unable to support the event to the appropriate extent as per the tier it was allocated, the proposal may be referred to the Executive Leadership Team by Council Officers as a New Initiative or presented to Council by the Submitter via a Community Budget Submission in line with the submission process set out online at [www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au), whichever is deemed the most appropriate by the assessment panel.

#### Unsuccessful Submissions

- If a submission is deemed either unsuccessful, i.e. it falls under Tier Four, or a submitter does not agree with the allocated tier level, the submitter may submit a review of the initial assessment online via the *Review Request Form* at [www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au) within thirty (30) days of notification of the outcome of their initial submission.
- The assessment panel will review the request and recommendations will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team for endorsement in November. Submitters will be notified of the outcome of their review request within thirty (30) days following endorsement.

Approval date	4 September 2024
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Next review date	2034
Responsible position	Manager Economic Development and Visitor Economy
Responsible Director	Director Economic Development, Arts and Advocacy
Version	1