Flag Flying Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent guidelines for the flying of flags at Council’s civic and community flagpole sites throughout the municipality.

This Policy purposefully divides the civic and community flagpole sites into two distinct categories for flags to be flown as follows:

- at each of Council’s civic flagpole sites. It ensures that Council complies with flag protocols issued by the Department of Premier and Cabinet – Protocols Unit and provides for specific arrangements for flying flags at half mast on days of significance or in remembrance of persons or events at these sites;
- at each of Council’s community flagpole sites and provides for specific criteria for the provision of such flags by community groups and members to Council so that community flags can be flown at these sites.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to Council’s five civic and two community flagpole sites as listed above. These civic flagpole sites are maintained by the Governance Unit.

Civic Flagpole Sites

The City of Greater Dandenong, as an expression of its governance responsibilities, flies flags at each of its civic flagpole sites. Council’s Governance Unit is responsible for ensuring that the flags displayed are acknowledged with due diligence, dignity and attention to position.

The locations of Council’s five (5) civic flagpole sites are as follows:

- Springvale Road Shopping Centre (six flagpoles outside Australia Post)
- Corner Lonsdale and Langhorne Streets Dandenong (three flagpoles)
- Springvale Council Customer Service offices (two flagpoles)
Greater Dandenong Policy

- Dandenong Civic Centre (three flagpoles)
- Drum Theatre (‘former Dandenong Town Hall) (one flagpole)

Community Flagpole Sites

The City of Greater Dandenong, in recognising the diversity of communities within the municipality, also flies community flags at each of its community flagpole sites. Council’s Governance Unit is responsible for ensuring that the flags displayed are acknowledged with due diligence, dignity and attention to position.

The locations of Council’s two (2) community flagpole sites are as follows:

- Multicultural Place, Buckingham Avenue, Springvale (one flagpole)
- Harmony Square, Walker Street, Dandenong (one flagpole).

When Policy Does Not Apply

This Policy does not apply to the promotional gateway banner pole sites which are located at:

- Springvale Road, Springvale (near Boulton St)
- Princes Hwy, Dandenong (opposite Robinson St)
- Princes Hwy, Dandenong (near Peter Stevens Motorcycles)
- Douglas St and Heatherton Rd, Noble Park
- Menzies Ave, Dandenong
- Brady Rd, Dandenong North

These banner pole sites are maintained by the Media and Communications Unit within Council and are used solely for the purpose of promoting the city and events.

The flag poles located at the Pillars of Freedom, on the corner of Lonsdale and Clow Streets, near Palm Plaza is a monument of the Dandenong RSL and is maintained by the RSL. Council does assist the RSL from time to time in the maintenance of this monument and will replace the Australian flag prior to Anzac Day and Remembrance Day events.
3. Council Policy

3.1 Flying of Flags at Civic Flag Poles

Council will at all times strictly adhere to the flag protocol of the Federal and State Governments and the guidelines set out in this policy and, as such, will display and fly only official flags of recognised states at Council’s civic flagpole sites. (Further information or clarification on flag flying protocols can be accessed at www.austalianflag.org.au/protocol.php). These include the:

- Australian flag;
- Victorian flag;
- Aboriginal flag;
- United Nations flag;
- City of Greater Dandenong house flag (pennant);
- Charitable House Flags; and
- Any other flag prescribed by the State and Federal Government’s flag protocols.

The following civic flag pole sites will fly the following flags:

- Springvale Road Shopping Centre, where there are six flagpoles located outside of Australia Post Council will fly two Australian flags, two Aboriginal flags and two City of Greater Dandenong house flags;
- Corner Lonsdale and Langhorne Streets Dandenong, where there are three flagpoles, Council will fly the Australian, Aboriginal and City of Greater Dandenong house flags;
- Springvale Civic Precinct, where there are two flagpoles, the Australian and City of Greater Dandenong house flags will be flown;
- Dandenong Civic Centre, where there are three flagpoles, the Australian, the Aboriginal and City of Greater Dandenong house flags will be flown; and
- Drum Theatre where there is one flag pole will fly the Australian Flag.

The Australian flag at Council’s office locations will always be flown in the pre- eminent position unless the Federal or State Government requests another official flag be flown.

Where declared by the Federal or State Government, a special flag or flags may be flown. When Council receives advice on special declarations by the government, the City of Greater Dandenong flag would be replaced with the special flag.

Council will not fly or display flags of former regimes or countries at its civic flagpole sites that are not recognised by the Australian Government.

Council restricts the flying of unofficial flags at its civic flagpole sites to ensure that the representation of the city’s cultural and ethnic diversity is not compromised and that no particular group within our city is either highlighted or disappointed.
This Policy does not restrict any community group from flying unofficial flags at their own private community events for the duration of that event.

Council will not:

- fly flags at, or maintain, a flagpole site outside its five civic centers or other sites specified in this policy;
- remove flags from its existing civic flagpole sites for any commercial or decorative reasons; and
- provide flags to groups within the community.

Guidelines to display the Australian National Flag

The Australian flag will be flown at Council’s five civic flag pole sites on a permanent basis. The Australian National flag takes precedence over all other flags.

The Australian flag should never be flown when it is in damaged, faded or dilapidated condition. When the material of a flag deteriorates to a point where it is no longer suitable for use, it should be destroyed privately and in a dignified way.

The flag should always be flown aloft and free as close as possible to the top of the flag mast, with the rope tightly secured.

The canton (Union Jack) should be in the uppermost left quarter as viewed by the person facing the flag.

The flag may only be flown at night when illuminated. In accordance with National Flag Protocols, street lighting is considered appropriate illumination when the flag(s) are clearly visible.

The flag should not be allowed to fall or lie flat on the ground.

The flag should not be used to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony, or to cover a table or chair or any other furniture.

The Australian National flag must be flown as determined under national protocols. For further information go to www.australianflag.org.au/protocol.php

Flying the Aboriginal Flag

The Australian Aboriginal flag was proclaimed as a flag of Australia under Section 5 of the Flags Act 1953 (14 July 1995).

Council will fly the Aboriginal flag in Lonsdale Street, Dandenong and Springvale Road, Springvale permanently in recognition of Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land on which the City of Greater Dandenong is located.
Greater Dandenong Policy

Council will fly the Aboriginal flag at council offices during Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks and at other times as required to mark any other key indigenous events.

Council will fly the Aboriginal flag at half mast at council offices to mark the passing of an esteemed local elder or Aboriginal leader, following a request from the relevant local Aboriginal community organisation.

**Flying the Victorian State Flag**

The Victorian State flag was originally proclaimed on 10 February 1870.

Council will fly the Victorian State Flag at the Dandenong Civic Centre annually on the 10 February to recognize the anniversary of the first proclaimed Victorian Flag.

Council will fly the Victorian State Flag at the Dandenong Civic Centre upon any known visits to the City by Victorian Dignitaries.

**Flying of Flags at Half Mast**

Flags are flown in the half-mast position as a sign of mourning.

To bring the flag to the half-mast position, the flag must be raised to the top of the mast, then immediately lowered slowly to the half mast position. An acceptable position would be when the top of the flag is a third of the distance down from the top of the flag pole.

When flying the Australian National flag at half-mast with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown in the same position. The Australian National flag should be raised first and lowered last.

Under no circumstances should a flag be flown at half-mast at night.

The Protocol Unit of the Department of Premier and Cabinet provides notices to Council when all flags must be flown at half mast, such as on the death of a member of the Royal Family, the head of state, Governor-General or distinguished Australian citizen.

At the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or in his/her absence the Manager, Governance & Commercial Property, the Australian flag will be flown at half mast to acknowledge the passing of a past Mayor or Councillor on the day of the funeral. Council will also acknowledge the death of a current Councillor, Council staff member or community leader and other esteemed community identities such as Living Treasures on the day of that person's funeral.

Following a request from the relevant local Aboriginal Community and at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or in his/her absence the Manager, Governance & Commercial Property, the Aboriginal Flag will be flown at half mast to mark the passing of a local elder or Aboriginal person who has contributed significantly to the community of the City of Greater Dandenong.
Significant Dates

- Australia Day – 26 January
- Commonwealth Day – 2nd Monday in March
- ANZAC day- 25 April (flags to be flown at half mast until 12 noon)
- Reconciliation Week (end of May)
- Queen’s Birthday – 2nd Monday in June
- NAIDOC Week – nominated week in July
- Australian National Flag Day – 3 September
- United Nations Day – 24 October
- Remembrance Day – at half mast from 10.30am until 11.02am

3.2 Flying of Flags at Community Flag Poles

From time to time, Council receives requests for flags to be flown at specific civic flagpole sites, however, Council must at all times observe the Federal and State Government flag protocols and the guidelines set out in this policy at those sites.

To accommodate such requests from the community, Council has made provision for two community flagpole sites in Springvale and central Dandenong.

Community flagpole sites have been installed as a means for different communities within Greater Dandenong to express and symbolise identity, pride and belonging which are celebrated at different and significant cultural and/or community or days and events.

Criteria for Consideration of Flying a Community Flag

Community flag flying requests will be forwarded and assessed by the Governance Unit and considered on a case by case basis. Only applications in writing from locally based communities for events or internationally recognized days and activities will be eligible to be considered. Where community, Council, State or Federal sensitivities are identified during an application assessment, approval may be referred to Council for resolution. Groups applying to have a community flag flown at Council’s community flagpole sites will be required to provide the flag that is to be flown. All requirements and guidelines for an application to be made in writing are provided for in Appendix 1 to this policy.

The following criteria will be considered when a request to fly a community flag at its community flagpole sites during days of cultural or other significance is received by Council.

The flying of the community flag:

- promotes respect for all;
- is part of an event or ceremony;
- is consistent with Council’s values and policies;
- embraces a sense of belonging and enhanced community life; and
- is not connected to individual advancement, political or cultural sensitivities nor exposure to adverse criticism of Council or the community as a whole.
On days where specific community flags are not flown at community flag pole sites, Council will fly its City of Greater Dandenong house flag at community flagpole sites. Council will also take priority at these sites, if it is holding a community event at either Multicultural Place in Springvale or Harmony Square in Dandenong.

3.3 Maintenance and Monitoring

Council's Governance Unit is responsible for coordinating the maintenance of civic flagpoles and sites and the monitoring of the flags condition while they are being displayed. If a flag suffers damage and is rendered unsuitable for display, the Governance Unit is responsible for coordinating immediate replacement and disposal of the damaged flag. Cyclic replacement is also undertaken on a quarterly basis.

4. Related Documents

- The Australian Flags Act 1953 (Commonwealth)
- Office of the Premier and Cabinet - Protocol and Special Events Branch
- www.australianflag.org.au/protocol
- City of Greater Dandenong Indigenous Policy

5. References

- This Policy supersedes Council's Flag Flying Policy which was last endorsed by Council on 9 June 2015.
6. Appendix 1 – Application to Fly Community Flag at Council Community Flagpole Site
## Application to Fly Community Flag at Council Community Flagpole Site

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<th>Name of applicant, community group, organisation</th>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Contact phone numbers: 1. 2. 3.</td>
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<td>Email address:</td>
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<th>Community flagpole location site requested (Tick relevant):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Multicultural Plaza, Springvale</td>
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<td>Harmony Square, Dandenong</td>
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<th>Description of community flag (tick relevant if this applies to you):</th>
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<th>Reason for display of community flag (tick relevant):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community event</td>
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<th>The first date the community flag must be flown:</th>
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<td>The last date the community flag must be flown:</td>
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GUIDELINES

Eligibility

Only applications in writing on this application form from locally based communities for events or internationally recognised days and activities will be eligible to be considered. Community flag flying requests must be forwarded to and assessed by the Governance Unit and will be considered on a case by case basis on a first come, first serve basis. Applications should be forwarded at least six weeks prior to the date when the community flag is intended to be flown.

Criteria Considered in Applications

The following criteria will be considered when a request to fly a community flag at its community flagpole sites during days of cultural or other significance is received by Council.

The flying of the community flag:

- promotes respect for all;
- is part of an event or ceremony;
- is consistent with Council’s values and policies;
- embraces a sense of belonging and enhanced community life, and
- is not connected to individual advancement, political or cultural sensitivities nor exposure to adverse criticism of Council or the community as a whole.

Other Considerations

- Permission may be given to fly a community flag for a minimum of one day to a maximum of 7 days.
- If more than one community group or organisation wishes to utilise one community flagpole site on the same day, priority will be given the application that was received first. If more than one community group or organisation wishes to utilise one community flagpole site during the same week, then Council will use its best endeavours to accommodate all requests during that week.
- Where community, Council, State or Federal sensitivities are identified during an application assessment, approval may be referred to Council for resolution.
- A response to an application indicating approval or otherwise will be provided in writing signed by the Manager Governance within four weeks of receipt of the request unless approval is sought through a resolution of Council. If approval is sought through a resolution of Council, the applicant will be notified of the progress of the application and the proposed Council meeting date within two weeks of receipt of the application. Once Council has made a resolution, a response will be provided in writing signed by the Manager Governance indicating approval or otherwise.
- Where an application is approved, the applicant will be required to provide the flag that is to be flown. The flag must be new and be 1800mm wide by 900mm high. The flag must be provided to Council’s Governance Business Unit at least one week prior to the date it is intended to be flown. The flag will be kept by the Governance Unit for the next time it is required unless it is picked up by the applicant.

Council Event Priority

On days where specific community flags are not flown at community flag pole sites, Council will fly its City of Greater Dandenong house flag, or other community flags at community flagpole sites at its discretion. Council will also take priority at these sites if it is holding a community event at either Multicultural Place in Springvale or Harmony Square in Dandenong.