

Australia Day Local Awards

Terms of Reference



1. Purpose

The Selection Panel is responsible for assessing Australia Day Local Awards nominations and making recommendations to Council for winners of the Awards. The Selection Panel will act in an advisory capacity only and will not have delegated decision-making authority under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

2. Objectives

Each year Mornington Peninsula Shire Council celebrates the achievements and contributions of local community members through the Australia Day Local Awards.

The Awards process is entrusted to local authorities by the National Australia Day Council and are administered by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to reward community service at a local level.

Australia Day Local Awards recognise community members' dedication and commitment to the Mornington Peninsula. Australia Day Local Award recipients demonstrate dedication and commitment to improving the community, going beyond their paid employment or committing hours of their own time for the benefit of others.

3. Context

Awards pay tribute to local individuals or community groups who have made an outstanding contribution to community service, have attained remarkable achievements or have organised a successful community event.

Contribution includes areas such as education, health, fundraising, charitable and voluntary services, business, sport, arts, environment or any other area that contributes to the advancement and wellbeing of the Mornington Peninsula community.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Australia Day Local Awards are awarded in the following three categories:

- Citizen of the Year;
- Young Citizen of the Year; and
- Community Event of the Year.

There is no obligation for the Selection Panel or Council to allocate an Award each year if it is the opinion of the panel or Council that there is no suitable nomination in any category.

The Selection Panel may identify a nomination which warrants consideration beyond the scope of the current award categories and may choose to create additional categories (up to 3) based on the individual merits of the nomination.

Additional categories may include, but are not limited to:

- Lifetime Achievement Award;
- Community Inspiration Award; or
- Excellence Award.

The Selection Panel must achieve a majority vote through discussion to recommend the inclusion of an additional category.

Where there is an equal number of votes the Mayor or their delegate will have a casting vote.

4. Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

4.1 Membership and Appointment

4.1.1 Councillors – The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor or Councillor delegate will be appointed to this Advisory Committee at the establishment of the committee and thereafter for a term of 2 years.

4.1.2 Manager–Governance & Risk – The Manager of Governance & Risk is appointed to the advisory committee to provide expert governance advice and actively participate in the committee’s deliberation processes.

4.1.3 Community Representative – up to 8 Community representatives will be appointed by Council through an expression of interest and selection process:

- Expressions of interest will be sought in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy
- Council will appoint the committee members to the advisory Committee at an Ordinary Council Meeting
- Every effort will be made to ensure a representative cross section from across the Shire are appointed to the Advisory Committee.
- Appointment to an Advisory Committee will be for a maximum term of two years with opportunity to nominate for a further two year term.
- Committee members should entail the below:
 - Demonstrate experience and involvement with community events and/or community awards;
 - Demonstrate ability to look beyond personal interests work with others to deliver the best outcome for the whole community;
 - Demonstrate personal and professional integrity;
 - Demonstrate expertise, experience and/or commitment to recognition of achievement in the community;
 - Have an understanding of Australian and local honours and awards;
 - Have a track record of constructive and collaborative decision making in a board or committee type structure;
 - Be available to attend and actively participate in Panel meetings;
 - Maintain absolute discretion around Panel deliberations and recommendations;
 - Have a proven ability to formulate and explain recommendations; and
- Be residents and/or business operators in the municipality.

4.1.4 Appointment of Chair – The Mayor/Deputy Mayor or Councillor delegate will be the Chair of the Australia Day Local Awards Selection Panel.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 Chair – The Chair is responsible for:

- Setting the agenda, ensuring that each meeting is planned effectively. This process is supported by the Governance Services Team.
- Leading the meeting and ensuring the meeting stays on track and on time.
- Ensuring fairness and equality to allow everyone to speak; and
- Approval of the meeting minutes.

4.2.2 Councillors – Councillors serve as a vital link between the community and the formal Council decision-making process, ensuring that local voices are heard and considered. In fulfilling their duties, Councillors are expected to uphold confidentiality in accordance with their official responsibilities. Councillors role as part of this Advisory Committee is to consider and vote on the recommendations of the Selection Panel at a Council Meeting.

4.2.3 Shire Officers – The CEO approved Shire officer is responsible for:

- Supporting the Chair and overseeing the Selection Panel Meetings.
- Setting the agenda and recording of minutes.
- Collate and distribute the nomination packs 2 weeks prior to the date of the Selection Panel Meeting (at a minimum).
- Be the primary contact for all Selection Panel members in relation to the business of the committee.
- Respond to any public enquiries about the awards process.
- Ensure confidentiality and appropriate record keeping is maintained throughout the process.

4.3 Resignation or Termination

- A member of an Advisory Committee can resign at any time. A notice of resignation must be provided in writing to the Chair, CEO, or the Shire officer responsible for managing the Advisory Committee.
- If a Selection Panel member demonstrates ongoing non-participation without leave or a reasonable explanation, they may be asked to explain. If absenteeism continues, the Chair may request the CEO to declare the position vacant.
- If a Committee members fails to comply with the Code of Conduct outlined in the Committee Management Policy the Chair may request the CEO to declare the position vacant.

5. Grievance Procedure:

5.1 Informal Resolution

- Selection Panel members are encouraged to raise issues directly with the person involved in a respectful manner.
- If uncomfortable doing so, the member may approach the Selection Panel Chair or Supporting Shire officer to seek assistance in resolving the matter informally.
- For disputes or disagreements that arise during the Selection Panel's deliberations on nominations, including voting or award category assignment, the Mayor or their delegate will

act as the final arbiter within the meeting. The Mayor or delegate will facilitate discussion to seek consensus and, where needed, exercise a casting vote to resolve deadlock.

5.2 Formal Grievance

If the matter cannot be resolved informally:

- The grievance should be submitted in writing to the Chair or the Supporting Shire officer.
- The written grievance should include a description of the issue, relevant dates, and any attempts at informal resolution.

5.3 Initial Review

- The Chair (or supporting Shire officer if the grievance involves the Chair) will review the grievance within 10 business days.
- They may meet with the parties individually to clarify the issue and explore resolution options.

5.4 Determination and Action

- Outcomes may include mediation, changes to Selection Panel processes, or where appropriate, a recommendation to Council or the CEO for further action.
- Where a breach of the Code of Conduct is substantiated, the CEO may recommend removal of a Selection Panel member, in line with the Committee Management Policy.

5.5 Appeal

- If the member is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by the Manager of Governance and Risk.
- The Manager of Governance and Risk's decision is final.

6. Code of Conduct:

All Selection Panel members shall conduct committee meetings in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the following guidelines:

- Act in the best interests of the Selection Panel and not allow personal interests to override these interests.
- Avoid and / or disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Treat all people equally and fairly.
- Refrain from using any circumstance or information connected to Selection Panel business for personal profit or gain.
- Protect and promote the integrity of all.
- Respect diversity.
- Treat others with courtesy, consideration, and sensitivity
- Any disagreements, where possible, to be resolved at time of meeting.
- Develop skills and competencies in accordance with responsibilities and help others to do so.
- Communication best practice will be used by members in both terminology and email etiquette ("Netiquette").

7. Decision Making

Advisory Committees operate in an advisory capacity and do not have delegated authority to make decisions. Their primary role is to provide informed advice and recommendations to Council and Shire officers, contributing to the broader decision-making process. While these recommendations may inform policy and operational decisions, they are not binding and must be considered and endorsed by Council or Shire officers with the appropriate delegation and authority.

Shire officers may implement recommendations if they fall within their delegated powers and align with the Selection Panel's advice. However, Advisory Committees must operate within the boundaries of their agreed scope, as defined in this Terms of Reference. They are not permitted to make recommendations on matters beyond this scope, ensuring that their input remains focused and relevant to their designated areas of responsibility.

8. Selection Panel Meetings

8.1 Schedule of Meetings

- One main deliberation meeting is held annually in November or December. If a high volume of nominations are received, an additional shortlisting meeting may be convened prior to the main deliberation to assist in the assessment process.
- Meetings will be held at one of the Shire Offices in Mornington, Hastings or Rosebud, or another agreed location.
- The Selection Panel can decide to meet at other times by agreement (e.g. to induct new Selection Panel members).

8.2 Quorum and Voting

- A quorum for a meeting is constituted by a majority of Selection Panel members, being half of the total number of members plus one.
- A meeting cannot commence, resume or continue without a quorum.
- If a Selection Panel member is unable to attend in person, they may provide their recommendations in writing to be distributed to all selection panel member prior to the meeting. These written contributions will be considered during deliberations, although they do not count toward quorum.

9. Agendas and Minutes

9.1 Agendas

- Agendas and minutes must be prepared using the appropriate corporate template by the supporting Shire officer.
- Agendas will be provided to all Selection Panel members five business days before the meeting. This will include any relevant documentation to be discussed.
- Selection Panel members will receive nomination packs two weeks prior to the meeting (at a minimum). This ensures adequate time to review materials and prepare for deliberation discussions.
- Agendas will be set by the Chair in consultation with the responsible CEO approved delegate.

9.2 Minutes

- Minutes will be recorded on the Shire's corporate template and circulated within two weeks of the meeting and be listed on the agenda for the next advisory committee meeting for endorsement.
- The supporting Shire officer is responsible for the follow-up and timely completion of any actions arising from the meeting and provide an update on the status of any outstanding actions at the next meeting.

10. Reporting

Council Report – A confidential report is listed at an Ordinary Council Meeting for endorsement of the Selection panel's recommendations.

11. Transparency

- The Terms of Reference is a public document available on the Shire website. Names of all selection panel members, nominees and adopted minutes are retained as confidential.
- The details of winning nominees are embargoed until 26 January each year. These details are made public in an official medial release on the 26 January and uploaded to the Shire website the following business day.
- Upon Council endorsement, Shire officers will contact all nominees to advise them of the award outcome and outline the next steps in the process.

12. Confidential Information

Selection Panel members must not disclose information that they know or should reasonably have known is confidential information.

13. Conflict of Interest

If a Selection Panel member has a general or material conflict of interest within the meaning of section 127 and 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020* in an item to be considered or discussed by the Selection Panel while they are in attendance, the member must disclose the interest to the committee before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. The Selection Panel member must:

- Advise of the conflict of interest
- Explain the nature of the conflict of interest.
- Provide any additional relevant details, if possible.

Where the Chair is of the opinion that the circumstances of the conflict warrant it, the Selection Panel member may be asked to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.

All conflicts of interest will be recorded in the Selection Panel meeting minutes.

14. Nomination Framework and Assessment Guidelines

14.1 Eligibility Requirements

- Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year recipients must be Australian citizens and residents of the Mornington Peninsula Shire.
- Non-residents may be considered for discretionary awards if they have made significant contributions to the Mornington Peninsula community.
- Community Event of the Year nominations must be for events that have taken place prior to the close of nominations. This category includes both one-off events and ongoing or regularly held events, provided they demonstrate a consistent impact on the local community. Events may be organised by entities outside the Mornington Peninsula, if a local organiser within the Shire is involved. The event must also show a clear benefit to the local community.

14.2 Award Categories

- Citizen of the Year (26+ years)
- Young Citizen of the Year (25 years and under, no minimum age)
- Community Event of the Year
- Discretionary awards (e.g. Lifetime Achievement, Community Inspiration Award) may be considered based on individual merit. While there are no restrictions on the titles of discretionary awards, their inclusion will be subject to unanimous agreement by the Selection Panel.

14.3 Nomination Criteria

Selection Panel Members should assess each nomination based on the following guiding criteria. Not all criteria need to be met for a nomination to be accepted, but these should help guide the deliberations and scoring process.

Impact on the Community:

- Has the nominee made a positive impact on the Mornington Peninsula community?
- Has their contribution benefited the wider community beyond the local area?

Inspiration and Role Model:

- Has the nominee served as an inspiration or role model to others in the community?
- Has the nominee demonstrated personal qualities of leadership, selflessness, and integrity?

Volunteer Service:

- Has the nominee contributed voluntary service beyond paid employment, showing a commitment to community welfare?

Overcoming Challenges:

- Has the nominee overcome significant challenges and demonstrated the ability to go above and beyond in making a positive contribution?

Commitment and Long-Term Contribution:

- Has the nominee demonstrated a long-term commitment to a specific activity or service that has had a sustained impact?

Achievement in Relevant Field:

- Has the nominee achieved excellence in their relevant field (e.g. community service, arts, local development)?

14.4 Key Considerations

- **Multiple Nominations:** A nominee may be nominated in multiple categories or for different achievements, provided each nomination reflects a distinct and eligible contribution. Multiple nominations for the same individual in the same category will also be accepted, as long as they meet all other eligibility requirements and include sufficient supporting information. The presence of multiple nominations will neither disadvantage nor advantage a nominee in the assessment process.
- **Nominator's Relationship:** Nominations from family members or close associates are permitted and will not diminish the merit of the nomination. However, the relationship must be disclosed, and the nomination will be assessed based on the overall merits of the individual's contribution, supported by relevant supporting information.
- **Voluntary vs. Paid Contributions:** The focus is on community-based voluntary contributions. Nominations based primarily on paid employment may be considered, though additional voluntary service will strengthen the nomination.

14.5 Ineligibility Criteria

To maintain fairness and integrity, nominations must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- **Non-Resident Nominees:** For Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year, recipients must reside within the Mornington Peninsula Shire. Non-residence may be considered for a discretionary award based on significant contributions to the Shire.
- **Incomplete Nominations:** Nominations lacking required information, and/or no sufficient supporting details, may be disqualified.
- **Previous Winners:** Nominees who have won the same award in a prior year are ineligible for re-nomination in the same category with the exception of the Community Event category.
- **Event Nomination Criteria:** For Community Event of the Year, events must have occurred prior to the close of nominations. Events should clearly demonstrate a benefit to the community to be eligible for consideration.

14.6 Due Dilligence Process

- To ensure thorough evaluation of all nominations, a due diligence process will be conducted, which may involve contacting references provided by the nominator to verify the nominee's contributions and impact.
- This process will occur either after shortlisting or if fewer than 10 nominations are received in any category, the due diligence process may begin before the initial deliberation meeting.
- This process ensures that all nominations are verified and assessed based on accurate information before final decisions are made.

15. Expenses

Selection Panel members participate on a voluntary basis and are invited to attend the Civic Recognition Event and associated celebrations as a gesture of appreciation for their valuable contributions.

16. Dissolution

Formal dissolution of this committee requires a resolution of Council.

17. Review

The Australia Day Local Awards Terms of Reference will be reviewed every four years or more often as required.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. However, any change or update which materially alters the document must be by resolution of Council.