

# *Council Policy*

Acknowledgement of Country and  
Welcome to Country



# COUNCIL POLICY

 <p><b>Adelaide Hills</b> COUNCIL</p>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND WELCOME TO COUNTRY</b>
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<b>Policy Number:</b>	COM-25
<b>Responsible Department(s):</b>	Community Development
<b>Relevant Delegations:</b>	As per the delegations schedule and as included in this Policy
<b>Other Relevant Policies:</b>	NIL
<b>Relevant Procedure(s):</b>	Code of Practice for Council Meeting Procedures Information or Briefing Sessions Policy
<b>Relevant Legislation:</b>	NIL
<b>Policies and Procedures Superseded by this policy on its Adoption:</b>	NIL
<b>Adoption Authority:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Adoption:</b>	15 December 2020
<b>Effective From:</b>	31 January 2021
<b>Minute Reference for Adoption:</b>	Item 12.1, 295/20
<b>Next Review:</b>	No later than December 2023 or as required by legislation or changed circumstances

## Version Control

Version No.	Date of Effect	Description of Change(s)	Approval
1.0	31/01/21	Approved by Council	15/12/20
2.0	17/08/23	Amended by CEO as per delegation under clause 5.1	17/08/23

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND WELCOME TO COUNTRY POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The appropriate delivery of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country is a fundamental element of respectful recognition of the Traditional Custodians of the Adelaide Hills. Council has a leadership role in relation to Reconciliation and a responsibility to demonstrate best practice in the use and protocols associated with Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country.

The following policy provides the Council with principles and guidelines for the appropriate delivery of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure the appropriate and consistent use of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country
- To outline protocols and expectations associated with Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country

### 3. DEFINITIONS

**“Acknowledgement of Country”** a spoken presentation that acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of the country on which the meeting or event is taking place, which, can be conducted by both Aboriginal and/or non-Aboriginal people.

**“First Nations People”** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the indigenous people of Australia

**“Reconciliation”** the process for building respectful relationships between first nations people and the wider Australian community in order to close the gaps, and to achieve a shared sense of fairness and justice.

**“Traditional Custodian”** a person who identifies as Peramangk or Kurna as the first nations people of the Adelaide Hills.

**“Welcome to Country”** a traditional welcoming ceremony performed by a Traditional Custodian of the land on which the meeting or event is taking place, or someone authorised by a recognised cultural authority of the Traditional Custodians.

**“Event”** for the purpose of this policy the term event refers to a gathering or occasion that is organised by Council

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## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

### 4.1 Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country can only be performed by a Traditional Custodian.

A Welcome to Country should be performed at:

- Medium to large public gatherings (50 or more people)
- Formal events such as receptions, launches or awards ceremonies
- Events or occasions that involve VIPs, Dignitaries, Leaders or Aboriginal Elders
- Events that involve international, interstate visitors or other councils
- Community events run by the Council

On these occasions a Traditional Custodian shall be engaged to perform a Welcome to Country and shall be paid an agreed and commensurate fee for this service. The cost of this fee should be included in the budgeting and resource planning for the events and gatherings as described above.

In the event that a Traditional Custodian is not available to perform a Welcome to Country an Acknowledgement of Country must be delivered.

The Welcome to Country does not preclude the delivery of an Acknowledgement of Country.

### 4.2 Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country can be performed by any person Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.

An Acknowledgement of Country should be performed at:

- Medium to large gatherings at which a Welcome to Country has also been performed
- Small to medium public gatherings (49 people or less)
- Council meetings
- Regular committee or working group meetings
- Formal staff meetings
- Community gatherings run by the Council
- Information or briefing sessions

The wording of the official Council Acknowledgement of Country has been determined in consultation with the Adelaide Hills Reconciliation Working Group and other relevant stakeholders and that is reflected in this Policy.

### 4.3 Council Meetings

At the opening of all Ordinary and Special Council meetings the following Acknowledgement of Country statement will be given by the Mayor or their representative:

*Council acknowledges that we meet on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna people. They are Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land and so we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We will care for this country together by ensuring the decisions we make will be guided by the principle that we should never decrease our children's ability to live on this land.*

### 4.4 Council Officer or Elected Member Acknowledgement of Country

At the commencement of all gatherings, where an Acknowledgement of Country is deemed appropriate (refer 4.2) the designated Council Officer or Elected Member will deliver the following statement:

*Council acknowledges that we meet on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna people. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land. Together we will care for this country for the generations to come.*

### 4.5 Written Acknowledgement of Country

4.5.1 A written Acknowledgement of Country will be included in significant Council documents and publications including the Strategic Management Plans and Annual Business Plan and shall read as follows:

*Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna people. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia. We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing. Together we will care for this country for the generations to come and in this context the decisions we make should be guided by the principle that nothing we do should decrease our children's ability to live on this land.*

4.5.2 A written Acknowledgement of Country may also appear on short written documents, Council's website and digital platforms, including email signatures in either the same statement as detailed in 4.5.1 or the shorter version as follows:

*Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna people. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.*

#### 4.6 Resources

Council will provide information for Elected Members, staff and community via the Council website promoting the understanding and appropriate use of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country including links to Reconciliation SA and Reconciliation Australia websites.

Council will provide contact details (with permission) of Peramangk and Kurna Elders willing to conduct a Welcome to Country and communicate the expectation that suitable remuneration should be paid for this service.

### 5. **DELEGATION**

5.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy; and
- Make any formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

### 6. **AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY**

6.1 This Policy will be available for inspection at the Council's Offices during ordinary business hours and via the Council's website [www.ahc.sa.gov.au](http://www.ahc.sa.gov.au). Copies will also be provided to the public upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.