

Media Release



26 July 2023

Adelaide Hills Council to move ceremonies away from 26 January

Adelaide Hills Council last night resolved to not conduct citizenship ceremonies, confer awards or support events on 26 January from now onwards.

Mayor Jan-Claire Wisdom said that the decision recognised the difficulties of the 26 January for First Nations Peoples.

“For many Australians January 26 is a day of celebration and national pride, however many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Aboriginal Australians, consider it a day of mourning,” said Dr Wisdom.

“This is a barrier to people participating in citizenship and award ceremonies, which are by nature supposed to be inclusive community events.”

“This decision reaffirms our commitment to being an inclusive council that respects First Nations culture and values,” Dr Wisdom said.

The Council’s consideration of the matter began with a resolution in January to engage with key stakeholders so Council Members could better understand the opportunities and impacts of change.

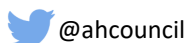
Dr Wisdom said “We considered feedback from community groups which hold events on Australia Day and while some preferred to keep them as is, there were others keen to find a date that is more inclusive of the whole community.”

“We took advice from the Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and engaged with the Australia Day Council of South Australia.”

The Council will abide by the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code by holding a citizenship ceremony within 3 days either side of 26 January and will now work with community organisations to plan alternative dates for local celebrations and award ceremonies.

Adelaide Hills Council typically holds four citizenship ceremonies each year and candidates can choose which one they wish to attend. In urgent circumstances citizenship can be conferred privately at Council offices. Citizens receiving Civic Awards have also been able to elect another date and community event to receive their award for a number of years.

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The report considered by Council can be viewed at www.ahc.sa.gov.au/council/council-and-committees/council-meetings.

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