City of STONNINGTON

Civic Recognition Policy

Civic Recognition Policy

Description	A policy to set out the manner of Council's recognition of issues, causes and dates of significance to the Stonnington community, as well as the flying of flags at civic buildings.
Type	Council Policy
Approval authority	Council
Responsible officer	Executive Manager, Governance and Public Affairs
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Version history	Version 1 adopted on 12 October 2026
Human rights	This policy has been assessed and is compatible with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

1 Introduction

This policy sets out the manner of Council's recognition of issues, causes and dates of significance to the Stonnington community, as well as the flying of flags at civic buildings.

2 Scope

This policy provides for:

- arrangements for the display of flags at Council's civic facilities;
- Council recognition by of cultural events, days of significance and causes; and
- a process for the community to request Council recognise an issue, cause of date of significance.

The policy does not cover:

- the recognition by Council of community volunteers (this occurs via the Stonnington Volunteer Awards); or
- support for community events, festivals and similar recognition (these can be supported Council's grants programs)

3 Civic Recognition

A structured approach to recognising issues, causes or dates of significance allows Council to act consistently and transparently. It supports social cohesion, acknowledges the diversity of our residents and reflects Council's role as an inclusive civic institution.

3.1 Why recognise?

Public recognition confirms that different cultural, faith and social groups belong in civic life, not just in private or community-only settings. This helps build trust, affirms dignity, and ensures residents feel seen and valued by their local government.

Recognising a range of issues, causes or dates of significance strengthens social cohesion by normalising diversity and encouraging mutual understanding. It also plays an educational role, increasing awareness of different histories, experiences and issues within the municipality.

Importantly, recognition does not imply endorsement of any single belief or viewpoint. Rather, it reflects Council's role as a neutral but inclusive civic institution, acknowledging the breadth of the community while maintaining balanced and consistent governance.

A structured calendar also supports fairness and consistency. It provides a transparent framework for recognition, reduces ad-hoc decision-making, and helps ensure that inclusion is intentional rather than dependent on visibility, scale or historical dominance.

3.2 Stonnington Tomorrow

Stonnington Tomorrow contains a shared vision statement for the municipality – developed in partnership with the Stonnington community itself. The statement envisages Stonnington as "a modern, sustainable and interconnected community that supports the good health and wellbeing of all (and) is a safe, accessible and creative city that celebrates and embraces all cultures including First Peoples past and present".

Recognising issues, causes or dates of significance is a practical, visible mechanism for delivering this vision. Without a formal policy, Council risks inconsistency between its stated commitment to celebrating diversity and its operational decision-making in civic spaces and communications.

A Civic Recognition Policy translates the aspirational vision of inclusion into a clear governance framework.

The Council Plan identifies "Thriving community" as one of its five strategic directions for 2025–2029.

Recognising community events and days of significance contributes directly to this objective by:

- acknowledging the lived experiences and identities of residents;
- supporting belonging and participation in civic life; and
- strengthening trust between Council and diverse communities.

A policy framework ensures this recognition is delivered purposefully and inclusively, rather than on an ad-hoc or reactive basis.

3.3 The positive duty to eliminate discrimination

Equal opportunity is about more than just fixing issues as they arise. True equal opportunity means creating an environment where unfair treatment and problem behaviour is unlikely to happen in the first place.

Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Councils have a positive duty to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation as far as possible.

Sometimes, to overcome discrimination, different approaches are required for different groups – equality does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same way. The Equal Opportunity Act recognises that some groups may need special assistance to ensure they receive the same opportunities as everyone else. These actions are what is known as special measures, and they are an important part of Council's response.

The recognition of persons subject to discrimination, sexual harassment or victimisation is just one of the many ways Council works to ensure our community remains a safe and welcoming place for everyone, regardless of circumstance.

4 Flags

4.1 Civic flags

The City of Stonnington recognises that all official Australian flags should be treated with respect and dignity. Although Council facilities are not federal government buildings or establishments, Council will observe, to the extent practicable, the Australian National Flag Protocols.

Flying the Australian Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag affirms Council's respect for Australia's Indigenous peoples.

Exterior flagpoles

The exterior flagpoles at the Malvern Town Hall, Prahran Town Hall and Stonnington City Centre shall be used for the flying of flags of national and municipal significance.

At each location, the Australian National Flag shall be flown in the position of honour. In all respects, flying of these flags shall accord with the Australian National Flag protocol as published by the Commonwealth Government.

Flag locations are shown in the following table.

Location	Flagpole	Flag flown
Malvern Town Hall (building)	Clocktower	Australian National Flag
	Secondary tower	City of Stonnington flag
Malvern Town Hall (High Street forecourt)	Flagpole 1 *	Australian National Flag
	Flagpole 2	Australian Aboriginal Flag
	Flagpole 3	Torres Strait Islander Flag
Prahran Town Hall	Clocktower	Australian National Flag
Stonnington City Centre	Flagpole 1 *	Australian National Flag
	Flagpole 2	Victorian state flag
	Flagpole 3	Australian Aboriginal Flag
	Flagpole 4	City of Stonnington flag

* *Flagpoles are numbered from left to right, as viewed when facing the building.*

Interior flagpoles

The Australian National Flag, the Australian Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag shall be displayed at all Council Meetings and at Citizenship Ceremonies.

The Australian National Flag shall be displayed at official functions where representatives of foreign governments are in attendance, and shall be accompanied by the flag of the nation they represent, where practicable.

4.2 Flags of recognition

Flags of significance to the Stonnington community shall be displayed throughout the year on the flagpole located in the civic recognition garden at the Stonnington City Centre. These flags shall be displayed in accordance with the civic recognition calendar or in accordance with the recognition approval process set out in this policy.

Information about each flag flown in the civic recognition garden shall be published on Council's website.

4.3 Half-masting

All civic flags shall be flown at half-mast in accordance with national flag protocol.

In addition, the civic flags shall be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral following the death of:

- a Councillor of the City of Stonnington;
- a former Mayor of the City of Stonnington or either of the former Cities of Malvern, or Prahran;
- a member of federal or state parliament who holds a seat in an electorate in the City of Stonnington; and
- a person who has made a significant contribution to the Stonnington community (as determined by the Mayor, Council or Chief Executive Officer).

Flags of recognition can be flown at half-mast where appropriate.

5 Civic recognition calendar

5.1 Manner of recognition

Throughout the year, Council shall mark issues, causes or dates of significance to the Stonnington community in a range of different ways. These may include, but are not limited to:

- hosting, supporting or participating in an event or function;
- displaying a flag in the civic recognition garden;
- installation of a temporary display, artwork or decoration in the civic recognition garden, a civic building or another public place;
- illumination of a civic building or landmark; and/or
- acknowledgement through Council's communication channels.

5.2 Civic recognition calendar

The civic recognition calendar forms an appendix to this policy and is adopted by Council.

Changes to the civic recognition calendar may be made:

- in conjunction with each review of this policy, which will consider current demographic data;
- following the presentation of an officer report recommending alterations; or
- by Council resolution at any time.

6 Requests for civic recognition

6.1 Requests

Community organisations in the City of Stonnington can submit a civic recognition proposal to mark an issue, cause or date of significance to the Stonnington community.

Requests must be made by a recognised organisation based or operating within the City of Stonnington. Individuals seeking to make a request are encouraged to reach out to a relevant organisation to make a request on their behalf.

A request should include:

- contact details of the person submitting the request, details of the community organisation they represent and evidence that they are authorised to act on that organisation's behalf;
- details of the civic recognition proposed, including (where relevant), options for Council's consideration;
- the reasons for the proposal, with particular focus on the significance of the issue, cause or date to the Stonnington community;
- where applicable, details of the community contribution (see below) that the proposing organisation is willing to make.

A request shall not be considered if:

- it seeks recognition lasting longer than 14 days;
- it involves the display of a national flag of a recognised or unrecognised nation other than Australia;*
- the same or a substantially similar proposal has been declined within the previous 12 months; or
- the civic recognition proposal would be inconsistent with an adopted policy position of the Council.

**The display of foreign national flags carries diplomatic and political connections that sit outside Council's role as a local government. Recognition of cultural communities is more appropriately achieved through flags and installations associated with the community itself rather than with a foreign state.*

6.2 Approval

Civic recognition proposals may be approved by agreement of both the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer, or by resolution of Council.

In addition to the consideration and approval of civic recognition proposals from community organisations, the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, or the Council by resolution, may initiate and approve civic recognition proposals at their discretion.

In determining whether to approve a civic recognition proposal, the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, or the Council, shall have regard to:

- the significance of the issue, cause or date to the wider Stonnington community as well as to those specifically recognised;
- whether the issue, cause or date would be better acknowledged in a different way;

- whether the civic recognition could cause offence or harm to groups or individuals;
- whether highlighting a particular issue, cause or date would be inconsistent with Council's values or commitment to inclusiveness;
- the practical considerations associated with the proposal, including the cost involved in implementing a proposal, whether suitable notice has been provided to implement it, the likelihood of vandalism or damage arising from the proposal and whether the civic recognition garden or other location is available for use on the dates proposed.

Where the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer make the decision, the views of Councillors (where known) shall be considered. Where practicable, this will involve a discussion at a Councillor Briefing, but it is recognised that time constraints may require consultation by other means or a decision to be made without first consulting Councillors. Councillors must be notified of the outcome of any decision made by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

6.3 Community contribution

Where a civic recognition proposal is approved following a community request, approval may be made conditional upon the requestor agreeing to make a contribution to the recognition, including, but not limited to:

- loan of a flag in good condition and approximately 1800mm x 900mm in size;
- funding or supply of any lighting, signage, artwork or other installation that forms part of the proposal; and
- supplying artwork or photographs suitable for use in Council's social media.

6.4 Partnership

Where a request forms part of a wider proposal by a community organisation to form a partnership with Council, the assessment and approval of the civic recognition proposal will occur in conjunction with consideration of that proposal.

To support a proposal, the Chief Executive Officer may enter into a non-binding memorandum of understanding with the relevant organisation.

7 Policy departures

7.1 The need to depart from the policy

The Chief Executive Officer shall be authorised to permit departures from this policy where adherence to the policy:

- would have material financial or staffing implications (such as the need to raise or lower a flag outside business hours);
- could cause offence or harm to groups or individuals;
- results in a conflict between different policy requirements; or
- is warranted due to extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances.

Council, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to alter or revoke this policy or to rescind the approval of a civic recognition proposal at any time.

8 Definitions

Term	Definition
Civic flag	means the flags flown at Council's civic buildings in accordance with section 2.1 of this policy.
Civic recognition proposal	means a proposal submitted to Council to recognise an issue, cause or date of significance in accordance with section 2.5 of this policy.
Civic recognition garden	means the garden and flagpole located in the Stonnington City Centre at the corner of Glenferrie Road and High Street Malvern.
Civic recognition calendar	means the schedule adopted in conjunction with this policy and amended by Council resolution thereafter, which sets out which flags shall be flown, when they shall be flown, and which flagpoles shall be used
Flags of recognition	means the flags flown in the civic recognition garden in accordance with section 2.2 of this policy

9 Responsibilities

Party	Roles and Responsibilities
Governance	• Administration of civic recognition requests; • Preparation and submission of formal Council Reports where a resolution is required; and • Conducting periodic reviews of the Civic Recognition Policy and civic recognition calendar and presenting them to Council for determination.
Venues	• Appointment of a flag marshal for each town hall and the civic recognition garden. • Cyclical replacement of flags. • Timely replacement of damaged flags where a flag is rendered unsuitable for display.
Communications	• Publication of social media content in accordance with this policy.

Party	Roles and Responsibilities
Flag marshalls	• Maintaining a subscription to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Commonwealth Flag Network email notification service and the Victorian Flag Notification Program. • Arranging the flying of flags in accordance with this policy. • With the assistance of Council's contractors, monitoring the condition of the flags and flagpoles and addressing any maintenance issue as required.
Mayor and Chief Executive Officer	• Consideration of civic recognition requests.

10 Related Legislation and Policies

There are a range of legislation, codes and Council documents that inform and support this Policy. These include, but are not limited to:

Legislation	Council documents
• Flags Act 1953 (Cth)	• Commemorative Works Policy • Cultural Diversity Action Plan • Disability Inclusions Action Plan • Gender Equality Action Plan • LGBTIQA+ Action Plan • Reconciliation Action Plan

Appendix A - Civic Recognition Calendar

Exact dates may vary from year to year. 2027 dates are shown.

Event	Manner of recognition
Midsumma Festival January/February	• Council participation in Midsumma Pride March. • Acknowledgement of Council's participation in the Midsumma Pride March through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Australia Day 26 January 2027	• Display of Australian themed banners on Malvern Town Hall for at least one week. • Hosting a citizenship ceremony on Australia Day. • Acknowledgement of the citizenship ceremony through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
26 January 26 January 2027	• Subject to the support of traditional owner groups, hosting a healing ceremony. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Lunar New Year 6 February 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Ramadan 7 February 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels on the first day of Ramadan. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Anniversary of Apology to Members of the Stolen Generations 13 February 2027	• Display of the Australian Aboriginal Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
International Holocaust Remembrance Day 27 January 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
International Women's Day 8 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Eid al Fitr 10 March 2027 (expected)	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
International Day to Combat Islamophobia 15 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Close the Gap Day 18 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Cultural Diversity Week 21 to 29 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 21 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
International Transgender Day of Visibility 31 March 2027	• Display of the Transgender Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Easter 26 to 29 March 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Pesach (Passover) 21 to 29 April 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
Pascha Sunday (Orthodox Easter) 2 May 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Vesak (Buddha Day) 20 May 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Anzac Day 25 April 2027	• Display of commemorative banners on the facade of Malvern Town Hall for at least one week, including Anzac Day. • Lowering of all flags in accordance with National Flag Protocol. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day 5 May 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Mother's Day 9 May 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
IDAHOBIT Day 17 May 2027	• Display of the Rainbow Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Volunteer Week 17 to 23 May 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels throughout the week, including acknowledgement of past recipients of a Stonnington Volunteer Award. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
National Sorry Day 26 May 2027	• Display of the Australian Aboriginal Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Reconciliation Week 27 May to 3 June 2027	• Display of the Australian Aboriginal Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the week. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
King's Birthday 14 June 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Stonnington Day 22 June 2027	• Display of the City of Stonnington Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
NAIDOC Week 4 to 11 July 2027	• Display of the Australian Aboriginal Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the week. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Wear it Purple Day 27 August 2027	• Display of the Rainbow Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Australian National Flag Day 3 September 2027	• Display of the Australian National Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
Father's Day 5 September 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
RUOK? Day 9 September 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Australian Citizenship Day 17 September 2027	• Display of Australian themed banners on Malvern Town Hall for at least one week. • Hosting a citizenship ceremony on or close to Australian Citizenship Day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Police Remembrance Day 29 September 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Rosh Hashanah 1 to 3 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Yom Kippur 11 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Community Safety Month 1–31 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
World Mental Health Day 10 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
National Carers Week 10 to 16 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
Ride to Work Day 13 October 2027 (expected)	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
United Nations Day 24 October 2027	• Display of the United Nations Flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Diwali, Festival of Lights 29 October 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Remembrance Day 11 November 2027	• Observation of one minute's silence in all Stonnington workplaces, where practicable. • Display of commemorative banners on the facade of Malvern Town Hall for at least one week, including Remembrance Day. • Lowering of all flags on Remembrance Day in accordance with Flag Protocol. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
International Men's Day 19 November 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Transgender Day of Remembrance 20 November 2027	• Display of the Transgender flag in the civic recognition garden throughout the day. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 25 November to 10 December 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.

Event	Manner of recognition
International Day of People with Disability 3 December 2027	• Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Chanukah 24 to 31 December 2027	• Display of a Chanukah menorah in the civic recognition garden throughout Chanukah. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels on the first day of Chanukah. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.
Christmas Day 25 December 2027	• Installation of Christmas decorations and branding in Stonnington's major shopping precincts. • Installation of a Christmas display on the façade of Malvern Town Hall throughout December. • Acknowledgement through Council's communication channels. • Inclusion in the civic recognition program published on Council's website.