
REPORT NO:	9.2
REPORT TITLE:	Review of Hume's Community Awards event
SOURCE:	Brad Mathieson, Senior Governance Officer Megan Kruger, Manager Governance
DIVISION:	Finance & Governance
FILE NO:	HCC21/1019
POLICY:	-
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:	3.1: Empower and engage our community through advocacy and community engagement
ATTACHMENTS:	Nil

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT:

Hume City Council's Community Awards have previously been presented at an event that is held each year on 26 January, being Australia Day. The 2022 event was postponed due to uncertainty regarding COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, and to seek Councillor views on changing its community awards and presenting them on a different day to 26 January.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 2.1 Approve that the Hume Community Awards be rebranded to a community awards event which will be held on an alternative date to 26 January, commencing in 2023;**
- 2.2 Approve community consultation to consider nominee categories that align with the community's values, and which encourage diversity and inclusion;**
- 2.3 Note that a Citizenship Ceremony will continue to be held on 26 January.**

3. LEGISLATIVE POWERS:

Under the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code, local councils must hold a Citizenship Ceremony on 26 January.

There is no further legislative requirement for a local council to hold an event on 26 January.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 The initial costs associated with the consideration of this event would be the cost of community consultation which would include a social media campaign targeted at residents and groups within the Hume community.
- 4.2 As an indicator for any future event the budget initially proposed for the Australia Day Awards in 2021/22 was \$23,400.
- 4.3 The Hume Resident Recognition Awards, which was held on Thursday 14 July 2022, was run at a cost of approximately \$9,500.
- 4.4 Future costs, should the feedback from consultation be ultimately endorsed, would include the cost of rebranding the event, advertising of the event, awards, and the holding of the event.
- 4.5 At the conclusion of community consultation, a follow up report will be provided to Council outlining any anticipated costs.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

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There are no environmental sustainability implications in respect to this report.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no climate change adaptation implications in respect to this report.

7. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS APPLICATION:

The learning through listening to Council's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) on the meaning of 26 January to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples has informed this briefing note regarding changing the timing of Hume City's community awards.

8. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION:

8.1 Councillor feedback regarding the need for broader and more inclusive recognition of residents in Hume City has also informed the preparation of this Council report.

8.2 It is proposed that comprehensive community consultation be undertaken to inform on the community's values, in order for a rebrand to be evaluated and progress.

9. DISCUSSION:

9.1 Award Background and Nomination Process

9.1.1 The Hume Community Awards were presented at a morning event held on 26 January.

9.1.2 The Awards 'publicly recognise the outstanding contributions of the many people who have enriched our community and inspired others through outstanding contributions and commitment' over a 12-month period.

9.1.3 The current award categories are:

- a) Citizen of the Year;
- b) Young Citizen of the Year;
- c) Community Event of the Year;
- d) Senior Citizen of the Year (this was a new award category in 2021).

9.1.4 All award recipients are chosen by a Selection Panel. The panel consists of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the immediate past winners of the Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year awards, and two community representatives chosen by the Mayor.

9.1.5 The recipients of Council's Resident of the Month awards were also included for consideration by the panel in the applicable Award category, which is most often the Citizen of the Year category, however no additional information is sought on these individuals, so the panel is reliant on the information provided by the nominating Councillor at the time when they are nominated for Resident of the Month.

9.1.6 The National Australia Day Council promotes the celebration of Australia Day and supports the presenting of Awards on 26 January, Australia Day.

9.1.7 A citizenship ceremony continues to be held on 26 January, which is a requirement under the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code.

9.2 Promotion of Awards

9.2.1 Hume City Council promotions seeking nominations for each award category have historically commenced in September each year, with a detailed communications strategy developed to support the promotion of the awards.

9.2.2 The process for nominations is they can be submitted online, which is the preferred method of submission. However hard-copy nominations are also accepted.

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- 9.2.3 Traditionally there have been low numbers of nominations received for the Young Citizen of the Year and Community Event of the Year award categories, and in recent years there has been a small drop in the number of submissions received in these categories.
- 9.2.4 No submissions were received for the Senior Citizen of the Year award category, which was a new category introduced for the 2020 awards, with the recipient of this award being an individual who was nominated earlier in 2020 for a Resident of the Month award.
- 9.2.5 Please see the data in table below which summarises the nominations received per award category from 2010 onwards:

Year	Citizen of the year	Residents of the month (Considered for applicable award category)	Young citizen of the year	Community event of the year
2010	14	12	5	1
2011	12	11	2	3
2012	8	10	8	4
2013	8	14	5	2
2014	8	13	2	4
2015	8	11	11	5
2016	9	13	6	7
2017	11	9	14	8
2018	10	8	6	5
2019	10	12	4	6
2020	12	20	6	8
2021	6	3	4	4

Table 1: Summary of nominations for Resident of the Month and Citizen Awards

9.3 Panel Consideration and Recognition of Award Recipients

- 9.3.1 Award recipients receive a globe trophy and a certificate when they receive their award to recognise their contribution to the community, however there is no further formal recognition of recipients in the following 12 months.
- 9.3.2 There is currently no 'runner-up' award or formal recognition of other nominees, either at the ceremony on 26 January or in the following 12 months. In some years, Mayors have chosen to mail Certificates of Recognition to Young Citizen of the Year nominees, however it is likely that many nominees across award categories are not aware that they have been nominated.
- 9.3.3 The proposed budget for the Awards held in 2021/2022 was \$23,400 which would have comprised of advertising of the event, awards, and the holding of the event, had the event gone ahead.

9.4 Rebranded Event

- 9.4.1 A review of the current Award purpose could involve community engagement allowing Council to establish Awards with community meaning that will leave nominees and prospective nominees with a sense of Hume City Council saying, "We're proud of what you do. We want to recognise your efforts and help you to continue on."
- 9.4.2 It is proposed that there will be approximately six to eight categories and will be based on the suggestions that members of the community provide, so categories may vary.
- 9.4.3 Some award categories that will be included in the community engagement campaign as ideas (but not as definite categories) could include:
- a) Mayor's Choice

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- b) Community event/activity of the year
 - c) New community event/activity of the year
 - d) Young Resident of the year
 - e) Resident of the year
 - f) Senior resident of the year
 - g) Community group of the year
 - h) Community sport group of the year
- 9.4.4 Re-defining the purpose and value of the awards may see an increase in submissions and return nominees and first-time nominees.
- 9.4.5 In reviewing the existing award categories of Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year, and Community Event of the Year, officers determined that based on the low number of nominations that there appears to be a disconnect with the community. By seeking community feedback on new categories, it would provide the opportunity for the community to have a sense of ownership of the categories, connecting more closely with the community's desires.
- 9.4.6 Strategic partnership and engagement with local businesses and organisations in Hume may also increase the value of the awards. Businesses might contribute financially to a community award event or contribute to an award or sponsorship which would be valued by the recipient and increase perceived value of the awards within the community.
- 9.4.7 As an example of the above, the awards could be re-established as Community Awards with an increased number of award categories that emphasize the contribution of local community members and groups as well providing an opportunity to tie-in the event with other events of recognition such as Volunteers week.
- 9.4.8 Held in tandem with a citizenship ceremony on 26 January each year, the duration of the two events combined, considering the duplication of the event program, is lengthy for all involved.
- 9.4.9 The award presentation could be moved to an alternative date and event format. For example, rebranded awards could be presented at dinner style event to coincide with Volunteer Week in May, or in July, 12 months after the Hume Resident Recognition event was held.
- 9.4.10 As the holding of a citizenship ceremony on 26 January is required under the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code, a ceremony will continue to be held on 26 January each year even if Council chooses to hold an award presentation ceremony on another day of the year.

10. CONCLUSION:

It is recommended that Council consider that the awards held on 26 January be rebranded as a community awards event held later in the year, proceeding to community consultation with input from the community on what form the event take, including event categories for the community award nominations.