



Flags and Banners Policy 2021

(Formerly known as the Flags, Banners and Signage Policy)

Purpose

Baw Baw Shire Council (“Council”) has a number of opportunities available for event organisers to showcase their event or activity.

Council offers a flags and banners program, which provides a strong visual impact, showcasing events and ensuring they are recognisable, as well as creating vibrancy and enhancing community pride in Baw Baw Shire. Council also offers a community billboard (“Warragul Billboard”) for hire.

This document further provides information on Council’s civic flags and associated protocols.

Governance Principles

Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the “Act”) specifies the overarching governance principles and supporting principles that Council must adhere to in the performance of its role and functions.

This policy gives effect to the following overarching governance principles outlined in Section 9(2) of the Act:

- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

This policy also takes into account the following supporting principles defined in Section 9(3) of the Act:

- The community engagement principles (Community Engagement Policy).

Scope

This policy applies to organisations wishing to hire Council’s flag and banner poles and the Warragul Billboard to promote upcoming community events or activities, a tourism destination or experience or a local business group or chamber of commerce initiative.

It further addresses Council’s protocols in relation to civic flags.

Please refer to the *Flags and Banners Guidelines* (“Guidelines”) for further information regarding visual promotion of events, requests to fly other flags, bookings, design approval process,

production, installation costs and other relevant issues. The Guidelines also cover off same information regarding use of Council's Billboard in Warragul.

Policy detail

Visual Promotion of Events - Flags and Banners

Council's flag and banner poles are available for hire by organisations wishing to promote upcoming community events or activities when they are not being used by Council and subject to other availability.

Some commercial use is permitted if use meets the following criteria:

- Flags/banners promote a local business group or chamber of commerce initiative as opposed to a sole business/businesses. Flags/banners must not be flown outside the township of the hiring business group/chamber of commerce so as not to adversely affect businesses in other areas of the Shire.
- Flags/banners promote a Baw Baw Shire tourism destination or experience.
- Any proposals to use the flag/banner poles must be approved by Council Officers under delegation in accordance with this policy.
- Business groups/commercial entities are subject to the same guidelines to which community groups must abide.

Requests to fly other flags

Requests by community organisations to fly flags other than those listed above will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor.

Such requests will not be approved where the flying of the flag would be inconsistent with Council's values and commitment to inclusiveness.

Visual Promotion of Events - Warragul Billboard

The billboard is available free of charge to not-for-profit community groups wishing to advertise a community event. It is not available for commercial organisations or schools wanting to advertise enrolments, however, school activities such as drama productions are permitted.

Civic Flags and Flagpoles

Civic Flags

Council has a number of flagpoles that are reserved for civic flags only.

The Australian, Aboriginal and Baw Baw Shire Council flag will be flown where Council has a civic presence through its customer service centres:

- 33 Young Street, Drouin;
- West Gippsland Arts Centre, Warragul.

These flags will be flown in accordance with the Australian Flags protocols. Council will light the flags at night to enable 24 hour flying, except during times of replacement or maintenance of flags and poles.

Council or the Chief Executive Officer may approve an alternate official flag to be flown to observe a commemorative day, event, or cause. In that case, the flag will replace the Baw Baw Shire Council flag.

Council officers in each location will be delegated Flag Monitors by the Director Governance and Information Services or Chief Executive Officer for the purpose of maintaining flags and raising and lowering them as required.

Flying flags at half-mast

The Australian National flag on the civic flagpoles shall be flown at half-mast in accordance with national flag protocol.

To bring a flag to half-mast, it must first be raised to the top of the flag pole then immediately lowered slowly to the half-mast position with the top of the flag one third of the distance from the top of the flag pole.

Commemorating local elders

Following a request from the relevant Aboriginal Community and at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, the Australian Aboriginal Flag will be flown at half-mast to mark the passing of an Aboriginal person who has contributed significantly to the Baw Baw Shire community.

It is usual practice in Aboriginal culture that the name of the deceased person is not spoken out loud for a period after their death. This practice will be adopted by Council employees communicating any commemoration.

Commemorating councillors, community leaders and employees

The Chief Executive Officer may direct that the Baw Baw Shire Council Flag be flown at half-mast on the civic flagpoles at on the day of the funeral following the death of:

- a Baw Baw Shire Councillor;
- a former Mayor of the Shire of Buln Buln, Shire of Narracan, Rural City of Warragul or Shire of Upper Yarra;
- a current or former employee; or
- an outstanding local citizen.

Council Meetings

At all ordinary and special meetings of Council, the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags will be displayed in a suitable location.

Dignity of the flag

The Australian Flag should be treated with respect and dignity. Protocols for flying and handling the Australian Flag are detailed in the Australian flag booklet. Flags must be handled ceremoniously, which means:

- taking time to handle them formally, carefully, and respectfully and avoiding sudden movements when raising and lowering flags;
- flags must never fall to or be laid on the ground; and
- flags must never be flown if they are damaged, faded or dilapidated.

Responsibility

Governance

The Governance team is responsible for:

- maintaining a subscription to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Commonwealth Flag Network email notification service;
- ensuring flags are flown in accordance with this policy;
- timely replacement of damaged flags where a flag is rendered unsuitable for display; and
- conducting periodic reviews of the Civic Flag component of this Policy.

Arts, Culture and Events

The Arts, Culture & Events team is responsible for:

- processing requests for the flying of flags from community organisations.

Flag Monitors

Flag Monitors are responsible for:

- lowering and raising the flags in accordance with this policy;
- monitoring the condition of the flags and flagpoles and reporting any maintenance issue as required.

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Responsible position	Community Events Coordinator
Responsible Director	Director Economic Development, Arts and Advocacy
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