

Ordinary Meeting

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 27 January, 2026
Location: Council Chambers, City Administrative Building, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 5:30 PM

Addendum Agenda

Mayoral Minute

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MM26.1 Mayoral Minute - Congratulations - 2026 Australia Day Awards 1

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HPERM Ref: D26/32535

Recommendation

That Council acknowledge all nominees and write to congratulate the winners of the Shoalhaven City Council Australia Day Awards which were presented on 26 January 2026 in a combined Citizenship and Australia Day Award Ceremony held at Mollymook Beach Reserve.

1. Shoalhaven Citizen of the Year – Megan Dover, Salt Care.
2. Young Citizen of the Year – Bella Dewsbury-Love, Sonder Youth.
3. Volunteer of the Year – Narelle Barry, Berry Shoalhaven Heads Magpies Rugby League Club.
4. Sports Achiever of the Year – Sophie Phillips, Bomaderry AFL Football Club.

Details

A very successful Shoalhaven Australia Day Awards and Citizenship Ceremony was held at Mollymook Beach Reserve, Mollymook on Sunday 26 January 2026.

Shoalhaven's Australia Day Ambassador, Dr David Kirkpatrick provided this year's keynote speech. Dr Kirkpatrick is an accomplished musician and Emergency Medicine Specialist.

As the son of iconic Australian music legends Slim Dusty and Joy McKean, Dr Kirkpatrick's life is a unique Australian story that bridges two worlds: the high-pressure environment of emergency medicine and the soulful traditions of country music. He is a passionate advocate for regional communities and shared his story of what it is to be Australian.

Thirty-seven people were nominated for four awards, with winners selected by the Shoalhaven City Australia Day judging panel.

I would like to congratulate the following winners:

- **Shoalhaven Citizen of the Year Winner:**
 - **Megan Dover** won the Shoalhaven Citizen of the Year award for her tireless work to tackle homelessness, hardship and social disadvantage in the Shoalhaven. As the co-founder of Salt Care, Megan has transformed the charity from a grassroots initiative to a widely respected organisation that provides benevolent relief to the homeless and vulnerable.
- **Young Citizen of the Year:**
 - **Bella Dewsbury-Love** was awarded the Shoalhaven Young Citizen of the Year award for her commitment to supporting and uplifting young people. Bella is a Program Leader with Sonder Youth which aims to improve mental health through positive action. Bella also volunteers with the Junior Albatross Musical Theatre Company where she has played a vital role in the success of junior productions.
- **Volunteer of the Year:**
 - The Volunteer of the Year award went to **Narelle Barry** who has been the heart and soul of the Berry Shoalhaven Heads Magpies Rugby League Club for 48

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years. Narelle has selflessly served in the club's canteen, welcoming players, volunteers, and supporters with her renowned beef and gravy rolls and even warmer hospitality.

- **Sport Achiever of the Year:**

- **Sophie Phillips** was awarded the Sports Achiever of the Year award for her role as the coach and captain of the Bomaderry AFL Football Club. Sophie brings unparalleled energy and passion to every game, inspiring those around her with her commitment to the sport. Sophie received the 2025 Best and Fairest award and has focussed on nurturing the next generation of athletes.

The Citizenship Ceremony welcomed 29 conferees and their families, welcoming the city's newest citizens from Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, Britain, Germany, Colombia, Thailand, New Zealand, Philippines and Sweden, who made their pledge to become an Australian.

Congratulations to the staff involved in bringing the event together and thank you to Cllr Selena Clancy, Assistant Deputy Mayor who was the MC for the day and to Councillors Steele, Norris, Casmiri, Tribe, Boyd, Kemp and Killian for assisting staff on the day.

Finally, a very big thank you to the Ulladulla Milton Lions Club for hosting the Australia Day event at Mollymook Beach Reserve and to the hundreds of residents and visitors who attended the family-friendly all day event to celebrate community, citizenship and local achievement.