



GREATER
DANDENONG
City of Opportunity

CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG STYLE GUIDE

OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Council's Style Guide

Council represents the interests of the community, and provides a range of services which aim to maintain and improve the quality of life in Greater Dandenong.

In order to fulfil this role, Council must communicate effectively with our community.

Simple, easy-to-understand information is paramount, particularly in light of our multicultural community.

The City of Greater Dandenong Communications Style Guide is a key tool to ensure all Council's communications are professional, clear and consistent.

All members of staff and Council contractors are responsible for ensuring that Council communications conform to this guide and have been approved by the Media and Communications Unit.

How to use this guide

This guide has been developed to offer you an easy-to-use roadmap to Council's corporate style and is a good starting point for any questions you have about communications or style.

- The style guide is designed to be an electronic guide. The content is in alphabetical order where you can click on the letter that corresponds to what you are looking for.
- You can visit Top tips for the most commons tips and also to print a top tips sheet.
- The headings to the left are some of the most important and relevant information you may need.

Don't hesitate to [contact the Media and Communications Unit](#) to help you navigate through the guide or for any communication-related questions.

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MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

We're here to help

The Media and Communications Unit is here to help you with all of your communications needs and is only a quick phone call away.

This guide has been developed to offer an easy-to-use roadmap to Council's corporate style and is a good starting point for any questions you have about communications or style.

However, you are always welcome to contact us directly for advice or assistance and it's a good idea to touch base before starting a new project.

Together we can ensure all Council communications are produced to a high standard that promote Council services, communicate clearly with our community and present a unified, professional brand.

What needs to go through the Media and Communications Unit?

Anything that is being sent to a large audience, or will be seen by a large audience, needs to come through the Media and Communications Unit. The team will not only check for spelling and grammatical issues, but also evaluate the tone of a piece. This includes - but is not limited to - letters, brochures, website content and signage.

The best way to contact the Media and Communications Unit is by emailing news@cgd.vic.gov.au. This will ensure your message goes to the whole team and that we can promptly respond to your enquiry.

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Abbreviations

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Australian English

Top tip

Council style uses Australian English so make sure your Microsoft Word online dictionary is set correctly.

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STYLE RULES: A

Abbreviations

Abbreviations consist of the first few letters of a word. eg December Dec. Avoid the use of abbreviations.

If space restrictions apply, we suggest shortening all words. eg *Sat 1 Dec* rather than *Sat 1 December*. If you do abbreviate a word, no full stop is needed at the end of the abbreviation.

The names of states should always be abbreviated in addresses and these should be capitalised VIC TAS

eg and ie

Please note that eg and ie do not require a full stop.

eg means 'for example'.

Council has a range of sporting facilities. eg Dandenong Stadium, Springers Leisure Centre and Noble Park Aquatic Centre.

ie means 'in other words'.

To arrange a tour please contact the Manager of Sporting Facilities. ie John Dandenong

Acronyms

Avoid acronyms wherever possible as they:

- assume the reader has prior knowledge
- interrupt the flow of a sentence
- make your text look jargon-heavy and therefore less appealing to read.

If you must use an acronym always write the full title first, with the acronym following in brackets. In further references use the acronym only.

Greater Dandenong is a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community. Our CALD community creates many challenges for service delivery.

Don't use full stops between each letter. **CALD not C.A.L.D.**

If you're writing something only once there is no need to add an acronym.

Some acronyms are so well known they can be used without initially spelling out in full:

- CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific Industrial and Research Organisation)
- MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground)
- TAFE (Technical and Further Education).

NOTE: The acronym CGD should not be used in any external document. If necessary it can be used in internal communications only.

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STYLE RULES: A

Addresses

See: [Contact details](#)

Advertising

Newspaper advertising

Staff can contact local or daily newspapers directly to book advertisements. However, if you have any questions or need advice, contact the Media and Communications Unit on 8571 5283.

NOTE: All ads must also be approved by the Media and Communications Unit.

Ads can be placed in different sections of the newspaper:

- classified section (public notices)
- general advertising (middle section of the paper)
- early general news section (usually within the first seven to nine pages) which incurs an extra cost in return for giving your ad greater prominence.

For instructions on how to book your ad refer to **The Source**

Ampersand (&)

Avoid using the ampersand particularly in formal reports and documents.

It may be used:

- in tables when space is limited
- when part of a registered business name
- on flyers if space is limited or for style purposes.

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STYLE RULES: A

Apostrophes

Apostrophes are generally used to:

- shorten a word
- join two words together
- show possession.

Apostrophe to shorten a word or join words

do not becomes *don't*

you are becomes *you're*

will not becomes *won't*

they are becomes *they're*

Apostrophe to show possession of an item/person

Council's park

Tracey's desk

In these cases the apostrophe is inserted **between** the end of the word and the s. However when using plural nouns, the apostrophe is inserted **after** the s.

councillors' car park

employees' wages

If the plural doesn't end in 's', to show possession you will have to add an 's' at the end.

the people's decision

the children's librarian

DO not use possessive apostrophes with these pronouns:

- yours
- his
- hers
- its
- ours
- theirs.

Its or it's

An apostrophe should be used when shortening 'it is' to it's.

It is a Council event becomes *It's a Council event*.

An apostrophe should not be used when showing possession.

Council held its event last week.

CDs and DVDs

When referring to more than one CD or DVD, do not use an apostrophe: use CDs or DVDs not CD's and DVD's.

Decades

Do not use an apostrophe in 1940s, 1960s, 1980s and so on.

Please avoid shortening years

eg the '80s but if you do, an apostrophe should be used at the start.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: A

Australian English

It is Council style to use Australian English including:

- 'ou' spelling - Colour **not** color
Neighbour **not** neighbor
- 's' **not** 'z' organisation, realise, summarise, maximise, categorise, privatise, finalise.

Ensure your Microsoft Word online dictionary is set to Australian English.

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B

Branding

Brackets

Bullet points

Top tip

Did you know Council has a range of indoor and outdoor banners to use at festivals, conferences, launches and events?

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: B

Branding

See: [Logo and contact panel](#)

Brackets

Brackets provide additional information within a sentence.

Use round brackets ()

When using brackets within a sentence, do not use a full stop in the bracket.

All of the owner's animals (dogs, cats, birds and rabbits) were seized.

If the brackets are at the end of a sentence the full stop goes outside the brackets.

A full list of our services is available (see page 23).

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: B

Bullet points

Bullet points are a great way to help readers find information quickly and easily.

Do not use semi colons in bullet points.

There are a few ways bullet points can be used.

Sentence fragments

The Media and Communications Unit is responsible for:

- publications
- website maintenance
- media relations.

In this case the items should be lower case and a fullstop used after the last point.

Breaking up long text

Sometime bullet points are used to breakup longer sections of text. When using larger phrases – use a capital letters at the beginning. If you have more than one sentence in one of your points punctuation must be used in all points. If they aren't full sentences you do not need punctuation.

Consistency is the key. If you have a bullet point list and some are full sentences and some are phrases rewrite the content so they are all the same.

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C

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Top tip

Check our list of commonly confused words including effect/affect, practice/practise and their/they're/there.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

Capital letters

Capital letters are used:

- at the start of a sentence
- with proper nouns and proper names (names of specific people, places and organisations).

Capital letters in publications and places

Use capital letters only when writing a publication/department name in full for the first time.

The Festivals and Events Plan
then the plan

Springvale Town Hall
then the town hall

The Economic Development Unit
then the unit

The Playgroup Support Officer
then the officer

Lonsdale Street
then the street

Some words commonly capitalised **incorrectly** include:

- seasons *summer* **not** *Summer*
- sport names *netball* **not** *Netball* (unless writing a club name in full)
- *library* **not** *Library* (only capitalised when writing out in full eg Springvale Library)

Capitals in publication names

Capital letters should be used for the entire title with the exception of small joining words such as and, of and the (unless it is the first word of the title).

The Festivals and Events Plan
not The Festivals And Events Plan

The State of the Environment Report
not The State Of The Environment Report

For more information about capital letters in headings

[See: Headings](#)

Fully capitalised words

Avoid fully capitalised words as they are difficult to read, can imply a shouting tone and can cause confusion for multicultural audiences. There may be some flexibility in some professionally designed work. eg this guide uses capitalised words for major headings on each page.

Capital letters when referring to Council

[See: City of Greater Dandenong](#)

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

CEO and Mayor correspondence

Correspondence templates have been developed to help you respond to correspondence (letters, emails, etc) on behalf of the Mayor or CEO.

If any correspondence from a resident or ratepayer is delegated to you by the Mayor or CEO's office for a response, there are some standard introductory sentences to be used.

It's also important to remember that all signed letters must be scanned and saved in Objective with the correct date and signature included.

For more information see [The Source](#)

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

City of Greater Dandenong

Referring to Council

'Greater Dandenong City Council' is our official 'organisational' name. It should be used when distinguishing us as an organisation, as opposed to this city we represent.

It is also our legal name, so for both legal and governance reasons should most definitely be used in:

- public notices and contracts;
- sponsorship and other formal agreements; and
- memorandums of understanding.

The 'City of Greater Dandenong' is our more informal name. It is the way we often refer to ourselves in the community in order to connect with people and sound less official.

It is featured in various scenarios. If you're unsure, please check with the Media & Communications team.

Some examples are as follows:

When referencing events, the 'City of Greater Dandenong' is not inviting you – **Greater Dandenong City Council** is inviting you – the people who live in the City of Greater Dandenong.

The Youth and Family Services team works at **Greater Dandenong City Council** (the organisation).

Confusion can arise when referring to both Council and the municipality as City of Greater Dandenong within the one document.

The City of Greater Dandenong provides many services across the city of Greater Dandenong.

It is better to use municipality when referring to the area.

The City of Greater Dandenong provides many services across the municipality.

The **City of Greater Dandenong** is proudly Australia's most multicultural municipality.

When first referring to Council as an organisation, use Greater Dandenong City Council in full. Subsequent references can be either Greater Dandenong Council, Council with a capital C or Greater Dandenong.

Similarly, if using City of Greater Dandenong, say it in full initially. In subsequent references, use Greater Dandenong, the city, or the municipality. When referring to councils in general use a lowercase c.

Most councils have a grants program.

Council is a singular entity and should not be referred to as a plural.

Council is preparing a report on road safety.

not

Council are preparing a report on road safety.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

City of Greater Dandenong (continued)

Referring to councillors

Capitalise 'Councillor' when referring to a specific councillor.

Write 'Councillor Jane Dandenong' in the first instance and abbreviate to 'Cr Dandenong' thereafter.

Councillor Jane Dandenong officially opened Dandenong Park. Cr Dandenong gave a speech and conducted a tour of the new park.

Use a lowercase c when referring to councillors in plural.

Councillor Jane Dandenong reported back to the councillors.

Referring to the Mayor

Capitalise 'Mayor' when referring to a specific mayor.

Write 'Mayor Jane Dandenong' in the first instance and abbreviate to 'Cr Dandenong' thereafter.

Mayor Jane Dandenong officially opened Dandenong Park. Cr Dandenong gave a speech and conducted a tour of the new park.

Use a lowercase m when referring to mayors in plural.

Mayor Jane Dandenong met with other mayors in the region.

These rules apply to all publications including formal invitations.

Referring to staff

Mr John Bennie, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) City of Greater Dandenong.

In subsequent references the CEO.

Job titles

Job titles are capitalised only when they refer to a specific position. Do not capitalise generic job titles.

For more information contact John Dandenong, Project Officer, Engineering Services

A project officer from Engineering Services will attend the meeting.

Business units

Only capitalise when writing the name in full.

*Economic Development Unit
Media and Communications Unit*

Spell out the full name of the unit/department in the first instance. In subsequent references use the unit/department.

The Economic Development Unit launched its strategy. The unit spent six months preparing the strategy.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

Council Facilities

Dandenong Civic Centre

Our main building is called the Dandenong Civic Centre and should be referred to as this in all written forms including invitations, website etc. It is not to be referred to as Dandenong Council Office or Dandenong Municipal Office.

Walker Street Gallery and Arts Centre

Walker Street Gallery and Arts Centre should be referred to in full when talking about the full centre (do not drop the and Arts Centre). In subsequent mentions it can be referred to as the gallery.

Always use the word and. The & should only be used in the logo.

Heritage Hill

Heritage Hill should be referred to as Heritage Hill. To avoid inconsistencies drop off the Historical Gardens and Museum line.

Drum Theatre

As part of a rebrand and to reflect the vision of The Drum as being an arts hub, Drum Theatre should be referred to The Drum. This applies in all instances except for legal documents.

Noble Park Aquatic Centre

Noble Park Aquatic Centre should be referred to in full in the first mention and NPAC in subsequent mentions.

Dandenong Oasis

Dandenong Oasis should be referred to as Dandenong Oasis (not just Oasis).

The Castle

The Castle should be referred to as The Castle (capital T and C).

Springers Leisure Centre

Springers Leisure Centre should be referred to in full in the first mentioned and can be referred to as Springers in subsequent mentions.

Paddy O'Donoghue Centre, Jan Wilson Community Centre)

The Paddy O'Donoghue Centre and Jan Wilson Centre should be referred to in full.

Greater Dandenong Libraries

The official name of the libraries is Greater Dandenong Libraries. The first letter in each word should be capitalised.

When referring to the individual libraries the start of each word should also be capitalised.

When referring to the libraries (without the Greater Dandenong) libraries should be in lowercase.

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STYLE RULES: C

Colons and semicolons

Colons are used when introducing a bullet point list.

Council runs a number of cultural tours:

- *Little India*
- *Afghan Bazaar*
- *Sensational Springvale*
- *Food Lovers*
- *Deli and Grocery.*

Overuse of colons and semicolons within a sentence can be confusing particularly for our multicultural community and should be avoided.

When using a colon in a sentence or list, the first word after the colon should not be capitalised, unless the word needs a capital

Bookings: essential

Venue: Dandenong Civic Centre

Comma

Commas can improve the readability of your text.

Commas should be used:

- between items in a list within a sentence
Greater Dandenong includes the suburbs of Dandenong, Springvale, Noble Park and Keysborough.
- when separating words that can be excluded from a sentence, without the sentence losing its meaning ***The Source***, *Council's intranet site, is full of information, advice and tips.*

Please note: An 'Oxford' comma, used before the and at the end of the list, is not used.

Commonly confused words

Words that sound alike or nearly alike but have different meanings often cause writers trouble. Here are a few common ones with correct definitions and examples.

Advice or advise

Advice is a noun generally meaning an opinion about what could be done in a situation.

Advise is a verb meaning to counsel or offer advice to.

Affect or effect

Affect is a verb, meaning to cause something to happen.

The business was affected by the *downturn in the economy*

Effect is a noun, which is the result of something that happened.

Her skills had a great effect on the department.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

Commonly confused words (continued)

Alternative or alternate

Alternate means 'every other' and it is used in relation to time or objects.

Recycling bins are collected on alternate weeks.

Alternate can also mean to switch back and forth in turns.

The wet season alternates with the dry season.

Alternative means a choice between two or more objects.

Food services clients have a wide range of menu alternatives.

Licence or license

Licence is a noun eg Driver Licence

License is a verb eg She was licensed to drive a car.

**Remember it is 'driver licence'
not 'drivers licence'**

Practice or practise

Practice is a noun

The doctor's practice.

Practise is a verb

I practise the piano.

Stationary or stationery

Stationary refers to a fixed or still object.

Stationery refers to writing materials.

Their, they're and there

Their is used for possession.

Their report was due on Monday.

They're is a contraction of they are.

They're working on the report.

There is used for location.

The report is over there.

Have and of

Using *of* is a common mistake.

Should've - *Should have* not *should of*

Compass points

Compass points should be spelt out in full, in lower case and include hyphens. *west, south-eastern suburbs, north-westerly*. Capital letters should only be used when part of a recognised geographical area.

*Noble Park North
Central Australia*

central Dandenong - 'central' should not be capitalised as not a recognised geographical area

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

Contact details

Names

Forms should include the terms 'given' and 'family' names.

Do not use 'surname', 'Christian name', 'first name', or 'last name'.

These all assume the reader has a European background.

Most titles (Mr, Mrs and Ms included) are not punctuated.

Always double check the spelling of a person's name.

Addresses

Our mailing address

City of Greater Dandenong
PO Box 200
Dandenong VIC 3175

See: letters

See: envelopes

Website and social media addresses

It is not necessary to use <http://> and/or www at the start of a website address

greaterdandenong.com
facebook.com/greaterdandenong
twitter.com/greaterdandy
youtube.com/citygreaterdandenong

No capitals should be used in web or social media addresses.

No exceptions.

Locations

Locations should be listed in full when used in any promotional material. We should not assume that readers know where something is located, even if we consider it a local landmark.

The Drum Theatre, cnr Lonsdale and Walker streets Dandenong NOT
The Drum Theatre, Dandenong

There is some flexibility in how this information can be presented. Contact the Media and Communications Unit if you require guidance.

Phone numbers

When writing phone numbers on a brochure or publication use the generic Council number. You do not need to include the (03).

Avoid using lengthy explanations when listing phone numbers:

Further information: 8571 1000 **not**
If you require further information phone 8571 1000

When writing a phone number in text say phone 8571 1000 not call 8571 1000.

Email addresses

Use the full version of your email address:

jane.dandenong@cgd.vic.gov.au
NOT jdande@cgd.vic.gov.au

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: C

Contact details (continued)

Email signatures

The City of Greater Dandenong has a mandatory email signature for all staff. See below

Jane Dandenong

Communications Officer
Ph: 9239 5283 Fax: 9239 5287
PO Box 200 Dandenong VIC 3175
greaterdandenong.com



 Please consider the environment before printing this email

There is an option to include the following line environment message:

Permitted amendments:

- adding your email address
- adding your department if your job title is not specific enough eg Administration Support Officer – Community Safety
- adding social media addresses.
- adding days you work, if you are part-time

Special email footers can be designed to promote Council events but must be approved by the Media and Communications Unit.

No other amendments are permitted without prior permission from the Media and Communications Unit.

Information on how to set up your email signature can be found in [The Source](#). Please ensure you use the correct font.

Contact panel

See: [Logo and contact panel](#)

OVERVIEW

D

Dashes

Date and time

Design

Top tip

Dates should be written in the order of day, date, month (and year only if needed)
Saturday 7 October 2017.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: D

Dashes

See: [Hyphens and dashes](#)

Date and time

Date

Dates should be expressed as a day, date, month and a year, in that order.

However it is not always necessary to include all these points. For example, you may not need to include the year for upcoming events.

Saturday 7 October 2017

Do not use commas.

Years

Never start a sentence with a year.

When writing years use a dash with no spaces between the years, rather than using a forward slash (/). Also leave out the first two numbers of the second year.

2012–13 **not** 2012/2013

Time

Council has approved ways to refer to time:

- time should be expressed using numbers
- use a full stop to separate hours from minutes not a hyphen or colon
- no space between the number and the am/pm
- don't say noon, midday or midnight
- do not use .00
- use a dash between times not the word to
- pm and am should be in lower case
- am and pm should be used in both numbers

- ✓ 11am–1pm
- ✓ 3pm–5pm
- ✓ 7.30pm–9pm

- ✗ 8:15pm
- ✗ 8-15pm
- ✗ Eight pm,
- ✗ 8PM
- ✗ 8:00pm

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STYLE RULES: D

Design

Council works with external graphic designers to ensure our communications are professional, accessible and eye-catching.

Any document released to the public, either printed or electronic, should be professionally designed.

This includes but is not limited to:

- brochures
- strategies and plans
- posters
- banners
- signage
- forms.

If you are unsure whether your document needs to be designed, or have concerns about the cost, please contact the Media and Communications Unit.

All design work is coordinated by the Media and Communications Unit and completed by an approved panel of contractors. Staff must not engage designers independently.

A design brief template must be completed prior to design work commencing. The design brief template can be found in Objective and **The Source**. You should allow at least four weeks for design and printing of a document. More time is required for complex projects.

Please contact the Media and Communications Unit if you require any assistance or advice.

**Remember design work must be conducted by a professional.
Don't waste your valuable time trying to complete the job yourself.**

OVERVIEW

E

Electronic 'e'

Ellipsis points (...)

Email addresses

Envelopes

Enewsletters

Exclamation marks (!)

Top tip

Remember to use lower case letters and no hyphens when using an 'electronic e'
email not e-mail, enewsletter not Enewsletter.

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STYLE RULES: E

Electronic 'e'

Do not hyphenate or capitalise any e references:

email	not	e-mail
enewsletter	not	e-newsletter

Ellipsis points (...)

Ellipsis points are used to shorten a quote. Use three dots, not more or less.

"Mayor Jane Dandenong is to be congratulated for her vision and dedication around the clock organising the community event."

becomes

"Mayor Jane Dandenong is to be congratulated for her vision... in organising the community event."

Email addresses and email signatures

See: [Contact details](#)

Envelopes

We have envelopes in a range of sizes featuring our branding. The format of the address should be as below, as this is the Australia Post approved format.

Name Surname

Job Title

Company name

Address

SUBURB STATE POSTCODE

It should be printed in Arial size 11 font.

Reply paid envelopes can be produced for specific purposes. Under no circumstances should existing reply paid envelopes be hand-edited.

For more information see [The Source](#)

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: E

Enewsletters

Any emails which are going out to a bulk audience should be done as an newsletter. We have a program dedicated to newsletters. For more information about creating newsletters contact the Media and Communications Unit.

If you are a current user please be aware that all newsletters need to be approved by the Media and Communications Unit before being sent. **Please allow 48 hours for this approval process.**

Exclamation marks (!)

The use of an exclamation mark is rarely warranted in our writing. Use sparingly.

OVERVIEW

F

Fonts

Forms

Forward slash (/)

Full stops

Top tip

Full stops aren't used at the end of headings, website addresses or abbreviations *Mr not Mr.*

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: F

Fonts

Creating a consistent impression is an important way of building our brand identity. Using the same typeface reinforces recognition and readability. Arial has been chosen because it has a contemporary, clean, efficient character and complements the typeface used in our logo.

All documents printed on Council letterhead must use this font. When a document is designed professionally other fonts may be used for design purposes, with the approval of the Media and Communications Unit.

The minimum font size allowed is Arial 10pt however 11pt is recommended.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

Forms

All corporate forms should be developed in the approved format and need manager sign-off before being distributed or being put on the website. For more information contact news@cgd.vic.gov.au

Forward slash (/)

A forward slash is used to show options. When you use a forward slash do not include a space between the words.

Applicants must have a business and/or economics degree.

A forward slash is also used to abbreviate certain words.

Kilometres per hour becomes *km/h*

A forward slash is used in web addresses eg greaterdandenong.com/snowfest

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: F

Full stops

Full stops are used to mark the end of a sentence. They should not be used in:

- headings
- website addresses
- abbreviations (Mr **not** Mr. Vic **not** Vic.).

Only one space is needed between a full stop and the start of a new sentence.

OVERVIEW

G

Gender

Government

Top tip

Use gender-neutral terms where possible such as spokesperson, chair or chairperson.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: G

Gender

Use gender-neutral terms where possible:

- spokesperson
- chair
- chairperson.

Write 'if they cannot attend',
not 'if he /she cannot attend'.

Please note: Legislation requires a good reason if asking for gender on a form. If gender information is required a third option must be provided.

M for male F for female X for indeterminate/intersex/unspecified

Government

When writing about levels of government, use the following:

- Australian Government
not federal or Commonwealth Government
- Victorian Government
not State Government' or the State
- local government or local council
not Local Council

Only capitalise 'government' when referring to a specific government and only when you write its full name.

The Australian Government funds the project and the Victorian Government provides administrative support. Local governments from throughout the state will deliver the project.

See: [City of Greater Dandenong](#)

OVERVIEW

H

Headings

Hyphens and dashes

Top tip

Check out our handy hints to make sure the headings and subheadings in your report help readers understand and navigate through the text.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: H

Headings

What headings do

Headings and subheadings should help a reader understand and navigate through text.

Headings should summarise the content

A heading should summarise the text that appears below it, so a reader can skim through a document and pick up the main points.

Help your reader, be consistent

Be consistent in the style and size of your headings to ensure your reader understands when they have moved from one section to another.

Heading punctuation

Council's preferred style for headings is to:

- not use full stops in headings.
- only capitalise the first word of a heading (unless the heading contains a proper noun)
- avoid using question marks and exclamation marks in headings
- commas, colons and semi-colons may be used in headings, but keep headings short and snappy.

Hyphens and dashes

Did you know that hyphens and dashes have different uses?

Hyphens

Rules for using hyphens are not hard and fast and vary among style guides and dictionaries.

Hyphens can be a useful tool to avoid ambiguity, but should not be over- used. The decision on whether or not to use a hyphen should be based on the context the words appear in.

If you are wondering whether a word should be hyphenated refer to the Macquarie Dictionary.

Most importantly, hyphens should be used consistently throughout your text.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: H

Some examples of words which need to be hyphenated are:

- community-based
- non-government
- performance-based
- world-class
- off-street
- user-friendly.

Some examples of words which do not need to be hyphenated are:

- coordinate
- no one
- wellbeing
- workforce.

Dashes

En dash

An **en dash**, roughly the width of an *n*, is a little longer than a hyphen. It is used for periods of time when you might otherwise use *to*. **Do not put a space between the en dash and surrounding numbers/letters.**

Examples:

The years 2001–03

January–June

To use an en dash press ctrl – (the minus sign on the number pad at the far right of your keyboard).

Em dash

An **em dash** is the width of an *m*.

It can replace commas, semicolons, colons, and parentheses to indicate added emphasis, an interruption, or an abrupt change of thought.

A large majority of Greater Dandenong residents—about 60 per cent of our community—were born overseas.

To use an em dash push the hyphen key twice and Microsoft Word will automatically convert it to an em dash.

OVERVIEW

I, J, K

Images and photography

Invitations

Italics

Jargon

Top tip

Council has an image library of photographs, available through **The Source**

If you cannot find a suitable image contact the Media and Communications Unit for assistance as further images may be available.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: I,J,K

Images and photography

Photography

Council uses a number of professional freelance photographers for Council publications and selected major events. Individual departments can engage photographers, at their own cost, to cover additional events and projects. The Media and Communications Unit can provide contact details for photographers. The Media and Communications Unit also has two cameras and a video camera available for loan.

Photography guidelines

A person's image is not protected by copyright and it is generally not an invasion of privacy to take another person's photograph.

The exemption to this is if the person is well-known and you intend using it in advertising, or if the photographs may be considered defamatory of people in them.

Council has a standard 'Photo permission form' for use by staff and contractors. It is advisable to use this if you are unsure about the situation, but it is generally acceptable that if someone poses for a photo you have their permission to take it.

If photographing children, it is advisable to first gain parental permission. Permission forms can be found on [The Source](#)

If you are hosting a public event with a photographer present it is good practice to have signage informing people.

A photographer is attending this event. Images taken may be used to promote future events and Council services. Their use may include, but is not limited to, the website and social media, publications, signage and in newspapers. If you do not wish to have your photograph taken please let the photographer know.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: I,J,K

Invitations

See: [Templates](#)

Italics

Italics for examples

Italics can be used to express examples, such as in this document. Italics should not be used to replace quotation marks. Beware of the overuse of italics.

Italics in titles

Use italics when writing titles of:

- publications (including books, strategies, plans or brochures)
- poems, songs and albums
- visual artworks (including paintings, installations and public art)
- films, television shows, radio programs and live performances.

The City of Greater Dandenong has endorsed the *Drugs Action Plan 2009-12*.

Have you seen the latest edition of *The City*?

Don't miss our latest exhibition *Things that go bump in the night*.

We do not use italics in event names (Wachter Reserve Day Out) or program names (Family Day Care).

Italics for website

Italics should be used sparingly on websites and web-based documents, as it impacts on readability for those with vision impairment.

Only titles should be italicised in online documents. Please consider this when creating document that will be placed on a website, such as forms and strategies.

Jargon

See: [Writing guide](#)

OVERVIEW

L

Greater Dandenong logo and contact panel

Legislation

Lists

Letters

Locations

Top tip

Did you know the City of Greater Dandenong logo needs to be included on all documents produced by Council and on publicity materials for events held in partnership with Council?

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: L

Greater Dandenong logo and contact panel



The Greater Dandenong logo needs to be included on all documents produced by the City of Greater Dandenong and on publicity materials for events held in partnership with Council.

There are three formats of the City of Greater Dandenong logo:

- landscape (horizontal)
- stacked (vertical)
- reversed

To ensure legibility, the logo should not be used with the name Greater Dandenong appearing less than 15mm in length.

The logo must not be distorted in any way.

In some cases there is a need for the logo to be used differently. For example a full colour that is not black or white. If you believe there is good reason to use the logo in an a different way please discuss this with the Media and Communications Unit.

Logos can be obtained from the Media and Communications Unit.

Proudly supported by logo

Organisations that are funded by Council through sponsorship need to use the 'Proudly Supported by logo' in their promotions.



Other organisations' logos

When using logos of partner organisations, such as government departments, staff must ensure logos are large enough to be legible and meet any specific standards set by that organisation. When using partner logos, artwork should be sent to these organisations for approval prior to publication.

When sourcing logos from other organisations the correct format we need is an EPS file.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: L

Council contact panel

The contact panel needs to appear on all Council documents available to the public. It has been created in two different formats to suit your document.

There are some exceptions to this, providing you first gain approval from the Media and Communications Unit.

 Phone 8571 1000	Find us online 
 Fax 8571 5196	greaterdandenong.com
 council@cgd.vic.gov.au	   
 TTY: 133 677 Speak and listen: 1300 555 727 Online: relayservice.gov.au	 TIS: 13 14 50

 Phone 8571 1000	 TTY: 133 677	Find us online 
 Fax 8571 5196	Speak and listen: 1300 555 727	greaterdandenong.com
 council@cgd.vic.gov.au	Online: relayservice.gov.au	   
 TIS: 13 14 50		

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: L

Legislation

Acts

'Act', when it refers to legislation, always has a capital letter.

Write the full title and year of the Act in italics while the year is written without brackets.

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1996*
- *Local Government Act 1989*

Write the name of an Act out in full – using italics – the first time you refer to it. From then on, you may write 'the Act'.

Jurisdiction

To show the jurisdiction of the Act, you have two options:

1. Victoria's *Equal Opportunity Act 1996*
2. *Equal Opportunity Act 1996* (Vic)

Use whichever will flow best in your sentence. Note that with the second example, the jurisdiction is not italicised.

In subsequent mentions choose either:

- The *Equal Opportunity Act 1996* aims to eliminate discrimination. The Act promotes recognition and acceptance of equality in the community.
- The *Local Government Act 1989* includes rules of governance for local councils. You can view the Local Government Act online. (Subsequent mention is not italicised and the year is omitted.)

If several Acts are mentioned, after the first mention, write as: 'The Equal Opportunity Act' (regular type, no year).

Regulations

Regulation titles are fully capitalised but not italicised.

- Control of Weapons Regulations 2000

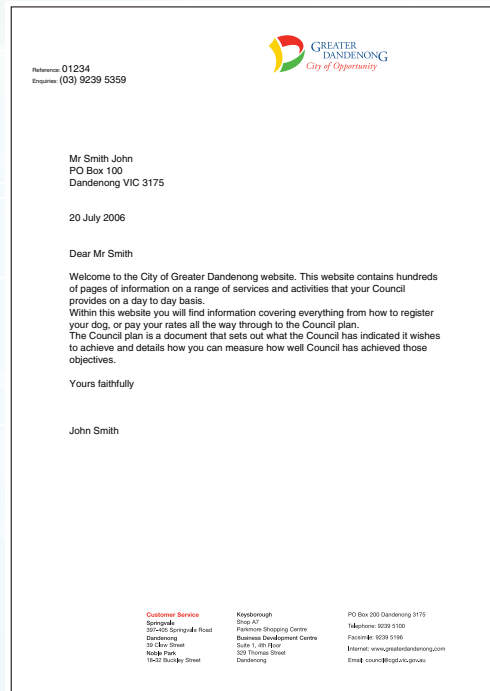
Lists

See: [Bullet points](#)

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: L

Letters



When writing a letter the font should be Arial 11 point and envelopes and labels should match.

Commas and full stops should not appear in the date, in the address, after sign-off or between the signature initials.

Allow enough space for your signature between the sign-off and your name.

Templates for electronic and printed letters can be found on The Source

Please note: All letters for bulk mail-outs should be checked and approved by the Media and Communications Unit and copy of the final letter sent to Customer Service prior to distribution.

See: [Envelopes](#)

Locations

See: [Contact details](#)

OVERVIEW

M

Mayor

Measurements

Media

Melway

Merchandise/promotional items

Money

Multimedia screens

Top tip

You can promote Council events and services on the multimedia screens at the libraries and customer service centres.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: M

Mayor

Use a capital M when referring to a specific mayor. When discussing the role of mayor or making collective references to mayors, use a lower case m.

When first referring the Mayor include their full title: Mayor Jane Dandenong. In subsequent references write Cr Dandenong.

Measurements

Abbreviate all measurements except 'litre' and 'tonne'.

Most measurements are written in lower case.

- centimetre *cm*
- millilitre *ml*
- kilometre *km*
- kilobyte *kb*
- square metres *m*².

Exceptions to this rule are megabyte *MB* and gigabyte *GB*.

No full stop after an abbreviation (except at the end of a sentence).

20km **not** *20km.*

No space between the number and abbreviation

50cm **not** *50 cm*

All abbreviations are singular

30km **not** *30kms*

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: M

Media

Local government is often the subject of media coverage. While Council relies on the media (print, online, television and radio) to promote key events and to inform the community about Council decisions and developments, it is important to note that not all media coverage is positive. Council's Media and Communications Unit is responsible for responding to all media enquiries and issuing all media releases.

The media plays an important role and is often an invaluable communications channel for Council. Council has trained staff to deal with all media-related enquiries to ensure Council's reputation is protected at all times.

For more information on dealing with the media please refer to on [The Source](#).

Speaking to media.

On occasions the media may directly contact a staff member or individual department. When this occurs staff should refer the enquiry immediately to the Media and Communications Unit. No staff member, unless authorised by the Media and Communications Unit, is allowed to talk to the media. This is as much for your protection as Council's.

The only people authorised to speak on behalf of Council are the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor. At times the CEO delegates this authority to directors.

Media releases

All media releases are prepared, approved and distributed by the Media and Communications Unit. Under no circumstance must a staff member issue a media release.

If you would like a media release prepared that is relevant to an event or key development in your area please contact the Media and Communications Unit who would be happy to assist you. All approved media releases go through a sign-off process and are stored by the Media and Communications Unit in Objective.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: M

Melway

Due to the nature of changing technology it is no longer necessary to include a Melway reference. If you choose to include one, the correct usage is Melway, **not** 'Melways'.

Merchandise/ promotional items

Promotional items can be a great way to promote Council and your specific service. There are a range of options available such as bags, pens, USB sticks and much more.

Contact the Media and Communications Unit who can offer advice on what might best suit your needs.

Money

See: Numbers

Multimedia screens

Council has multimedia screens in its customer services centres and libraries. These screens can be used to promote your service or event. Please contact the Media and Communications Unit for more information.

OVERVIEW

N,0

Names and titles

Numbers

On-hold message

Top tip

Write out in full numbers one to nine.
Use numerals for 10 onwards.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: N,O

Names and titles

See: Referring to Council
Contact details

Numbers

Write out in full numbers one to nine. Use numerals for 10 onwards.

Use commas in numbers 1,000 and above.

Avoid starting a sentence with a number higher than nine.

*There were 57 people at the event. **NOT** 57 people attended the event.*

Always use numerals (not words) in tables or graphs, even for numbers less than 10.

Money

Do not include the '.00' when writing about money.

\$57 **not** \$57.00

Use the '\$' symbol, but we do not use the '¢' symbol.

\$57.50 **not** \$57.50c

Numbers less than \$1million should be written out in full.

\$765,000 **not** \$0.76 million or 765 thousand

For financial documents and in tables 0.76 million can be used if it helps make the content clearer.

Numbers greater than one million should be rounded up or down to no more than two decimal places

\$1.75 million **not** \$1.754 million

See: Per cent
Dates

OVERVIEW

P

Per cent

Phone numbers

Photography

Plaques

Powerpoint presentations

Print shop

Privacy

Publications/brochures

Punctuation

Top tip

Always spell out per cent.
The symbol % can only be used
in tables and graphs.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: P

Per cent

Always spell out per cent. The symbol % can only be used in tables and graphs.

Per cent is two words:

per cent **NOT** *percent*

Phone numbers

See: [Contact details](#)

Photography

See: [Images and photography](#)

Plaques

Plaques and memorials are important in celebrating the achievements of Council, the city and its community. They also provide historical context for current and future generations, and serve as memorials.

A policy exists to provide a framework for the placement of memorials and plaques in public open spaces, public facilities and buildings, and to ensure a clear, open, equitable and accountable process is in place.

If considering any type of plaque or memorial, please refer to the policy in

[The Source](#)

Powerpoint presentations

See: [Templates](#)

Print shop

Council has an in-house print shop to assist with your printing needs.

The print shop can print a maximum print run of 1000 pages in any one colour print job.

Any publication, brochure or flyer sent to the print shop for printing must include the Council logo and must have written approval from the Media and Communications Unit before printing will be completed.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: P

Privacy

Council has a privacy policy which can be found in [The Source](#)

When requesting any information from the public the following privacy statement needs to be added to the form:

We respect your privacy. We will not sell or give away your personal information, unless required by law. Occasionally, we may use your details for our own research purposes or to let you know about other council information. If you want to see your personal data, modify your details, or if you receive information from us you do not want in the future please contact Council on 8571 1000.

Publications/brochures

See: [Design](#)

Punctuation

See: [Lists](#)

[Colons](#)

[Exclamation marks](#)

[Full stops](#)

OVERVIEW

Q,R

Quotation marks

Rounding numbers

Top tip

There are two kinds of quotation marks: single and double. Check to make sure you are using the correct kind.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: Q,R

Quotation marks

There are two kinds of quotation marks:
single ' ' and double " ".

Use double quotation marks when
directly quoting someone.

"Springvale has some of the best
Asian food in Melbourne," Mayor
John Park said.

Use single quotation marks for a quote
within a quote

"Mayor Park said that Springvale
has 'some of the best Asian food
in Melbourne' and I agree," Mary
Keysborough said.

Don't use quotation marks for show or
book titles. These should be in italics.

When a quote runs over two paragraphs
you do not need quotation marks at the
end of the first paragraph but you need
opening marks at the start of the second
paragraph.

Rounding numbers

See: [Numbers](#)

OVERVIEW

S

Signage

Size

Social media

Speeches

Spelling

States and territories

Street names

Top tip

The minimum font size for Council documents is 10pt.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: S

Signage

There are a range of promotional signage opportunities throughout the municipality:

- flags
- Dandenong Station poster boxes
- bin signage
- Springvale Sky Sign
- bus shelters.

Other signage around the municipality includes:

- sportsground naming and rules
- off-leash dog areas
- CCTV and no drinking
- street signage
- parking.

All signage should be arranged with the Media and Communications Unit in conjunction with the Urban Planning and Activity Centres Revitalisation teams with the exception of parking and street signage.

Size

The minimum font for Council documents size is Arial 10pt. The recommended font size for body text is 11pt.

The text City of Opportunity in the logo should never be smaller than 15mm in length.

See: [Fonts](#)

[Greater Dandenong logo and contact panel.](#)

Social media

Council uses a range of social media to engage with our community including:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- SMS.

All Council use of social media is subject to our Social Media Policy. This can be found in [The Source](#).

In addition to Council's official social media pages, several units have individual social media forums (eg Drum Theatre Facebook page).

To promote your event or service on existing social media, or to set up a department-specific account, please contact the Media and Communications Unit.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: S

Speeches

If you have an event or function coming up that you would like the mayor to speak at you must first check the mayor's availability by phoning the mayor's office on X 5230.

Then complete a speech request form available on [The Source](#). At least two weeks notice should be given.

Spelling

See: [Australian English](#)

States and territories

Abbreviate the names of Australian states and territories:

- ACT
- NSW
- NT
- Qld
- SA
- Tas
- Vic
- WA.

No full stop is needed for abbreviated states and territories.

Capitalise abbreviated states (VIC, TAS) in mailing addresses.

Street names

Spell out Street, Road, Avenue, Lane, Crescent, Court, Way and Parade.

Do not capitalise if plural.

- The bus stop is in Lonsdale Street.
- The Drum Theatre is on the corner Lonsdale and Walker streets.

Street names can be shortened only where space is limited.

OVERVIEW

T,U,V

Telephone numbers

Templates

The City magazine

Tone

Translations

Time

Titles (names)

Top tip

Did you know Council has a range of templates to make your job easier and ensure we present a consistent and professional image?

They include PowerPoint presentations, invitations, certificates, reports and more.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: T,U,V

Telephone numbers

See: [Contact details](#)

Templates

A range of templates have been prepared to ensure Council correspondence and presentations are presented in a consistent manner.

These templates will assist staff to complete tasks quickly and ensure a professional result.

Templates are in [The Source](#) and need to be used for the following:

- PowerPoint presentations
- invitations
- certificates
- memos
- internal reports
- faxes.

Council also has set styles for letters, envelopes, email signatures and business cards. Refer to individual sections on these items.

The City magazine

The City is Council's monthly magazine, sent to around 56,000 homes across the municipality.

It can be used by departments to engage with the community, promote events, celebrate achievements and call for community feedback.

Due to printing and design deadlines, *The City* is prepared well before publication.

Departments should contact the Media and Communications Unit at least two months before you want an article to appear. Deadlines for *The City* are available in [The Source](#).

Tone

Using the appropriate tone in any communication is critical.

Tone can be positive or negative, biased or neutral. It can also be friendly or detached, threatening or polite.

Tone can be easily confused in written communications and great care should be taken to make all communications clear and courteous.

Please seek assistance by getting someone else to check over your wording, particularly if you are communicating a sensitive message.

Please note: All bulk mail-outs of more than 100 letters must first be approved by the Media and Communications Unit.

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: T,U,V

Translations

Council translates written material from time to time, when targeting a specific cultural group.

Our website includes information on key Council services translated into the most common languages in our community.

However, with people from more than 150 different nationalities living in Greater Dandenong, it is not possible to provide translations for all our community.

Instead, Council endeavours to produce simple, clear writing in plain English.

If you require assistance with a translation contact the Media and Communications Unit.

Time

See: [Date and time](#)

Titles (names)

See: [Contact details](#)

OVERVIEW

W,X,Y,Z

Website

WiFi

OVERVIEW

STYLE RULES: W,X,Y,Z

Website



Council's website

Council uses its public website greaterdandenong.com to ensure the community is informed of services, activities, events, decisions and strategic directions.

All staff are responsible for ensuring the content on the website is accurate and up-to-date. Staff can request additions and changes to the website by emailing website@cgd.vic.gov.au

The Media and Communications Unit will edit text to ensure it is clear and confirms to the Style Guide and meets our accessibility requirements. The use of images is strongly encouraged.

Please allow at least 10 working days for content updates. If you require something urgently please call the Media and Communications Unit on X 5311.

Style on the website

Where possible all text on the website will conform to the Style Guide however there are some exceptions. Some examples are:

- Numbers 1-10 can be represented numerically
- Verdana is used on the Council website instead of Arial.

Documents on the website

If you require a document to be added to the website please ensure the following:

- files size must be acceptable for the web
- files must be laid out appropriately for web viewing
- where possible multiple formats should be provided.

Where a document is put on the website as a PDF, a note will be included that it can be requested in an alternative format. This is to ensure we meet accessibility requirements.

[See: Contact details](#)

WiFi

When referring to WiFi please write it with a capital W and a capital F with no hyphen or space.

WiFi

OVERVIEW

WRITING GUIDE

Before you start

Before you begin writing consider the following issues:

Your audience:

Who do you want to read this?
What level of English/technical knowledge do they have? How much time will they dedicate to reading it?

Your message:

What is the main point/s you want your audience to understand?
What action do you want them to take?

Research:

Do you have all the relevant information required (who, what, where, when, why and how)?

Clear writing follows clear thought.
So think what you want to say, then say it as simply as possible.

Writing tips:

Keep it simple:

Use no more than 30 words per sentence.

Express only one idea in a sentence.

Use dot points and sub headings to break up complex information.

Use plain English, remove 'local government speak' and translate jargon or complex issues into simple terms.

Proofread:

Spelling and grammatical errors reflect a poor image of Council.

Always proofread your document, double-checking spellings of names and accuracy of facts and figures.

Ask a colleague not familiar with the subject matter to proofread your work.
Do they understand it? Are your key messages clear?

For more information on specific punctuation and grammar questions see the A-Z guide.

See: [Australian English](#)