



9.1 **DRAFT LGBTIQA+ ACTION PLAN 2023-26 - ENDORSE FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-2026 and endorse its release for community consultation.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The City of Port Phillip has the equal highest representation of people identifying as LGBTIQA+ of all municipalities across Victoria at an estimated 26% of all adult residents.
- 2.2 Council resolved at its meeting on July 2021 to establish an LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee and to commence preparation of a LGBTIQA+ Action Plan.
- 2.3 The purpose of an LGBTIQA+ Action Plan is to set out desired outcomes, based on the needs and aspirations of LGBTIQA+ people in our municipality, and guide Council in its role of embedding LGBTIQA+ inclusion across Council activities to achieve these outcomes.
- 2.4 Officers have now prepared a draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan that will guide Council action to support an LGBTIQA+ inclusive Port Phillip.
- 2.5 The draft Action Plan has been informed by the oversight and on-going advice of Council's LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, a series of stakeholder engagement workshops, and available data / evidence related to the Port Phillip and wider LGBTIQA+ communities.
- 2.6 The draft Action Plan sets out five focus areas, defined by the outcomes sought and the roles Council will play. Each focus area includes a set of strategies to achieve the outcome and identifies the specific actions Council will undertake.
- 2.7 This report seeks Council endorsement to undertake community consultation on the draft Action Plan, prior to Council considering its adoption.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Releases the draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26 (provided as Attachment 1) for a four-week period of consultation between 17 March and 17 April 2023.
- 3.2 Notes that a further report outlining the findings of the community consultation and any proposed changes to the draft Action Plan arising from feedback will be presented to Council in July 2023.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The City of Port Phillip has the equal highest representation of people identifying as LGBTIQA+ of all municipalities across Victoria (in line with Darebin). An estimated



*26% of all adult residents identify as LGBTIQ which is significantly higher than the Victorian average of 14% (*estimate based on the Victorian Population Health Survey, reweighted to reflect a number of robust and representative studies.)

- 4.2 The Victorian Pride Centre and its resident organisations, many of which provide services to persons identifying as LGBTIQ+, is located on Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, which is also home to the annual Pride March. Port Phillip is therefore also a focal point and destination for LGBTIQ+ persons who visit but live outside the city.
- 4.3 As LGBTIQ+ visibility and equality has increased, so too have threats to personal safety and violence. The Australian Human Rights Commission has reported that 6 in 10 LGBTIQ+ people experienced verbal homophobic abuse and 1 in 5 experienced physical abuse in a 12-month period.
- 4.4 LGBTIQ+ people are up to six times more likely to experience mental health difficulties compared to the general population, and 13 times more likely to attempt to take their life than the general population. This is due to the experience of abuse and discrimination, the fear of discrimination and internalised stigma and victimisation.
- 4.5 On 21 April 2021, Council resolved to:
 - Establish an LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee to provide advice and feedback to Council on matters that affect LGBTIQ+ residents, businesses, and community members and those who work in and visit the City.
 - Develop the City of Port Phillip's first LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, guided by advice from the Advisory Committee.
 - Commit to a program of work that would see Council services and programs move towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation by 2024.
- 4.6 The purpose of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan is to set out the needs and aspirations for LGBTIQ+ people in our municipality, establish desired outcomes, and guide Council in its role of embedding LGBTIQ+ inclusion across Council activities to achieve these outcomes.

Process to develop the draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan

- 4.7 The draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan (provided at Attachment 1) has been informed by research and data analysis to better understand our LGBTIQ+ communities, their needs, contribution to our diverse community, and opportunities to enhance safety, health and wellbeing.
- 4.8 The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, comprising 10 community members and a Councillor, has been meeting monthly since February 2022 with a focus on development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan.
- 4.9 The work of the Committee has informed development of guiding principles and priority outcomes related to the specific roles that Council plays. A set of strategies and actions to support delivery of each outcome was then developed.
- 4.10 To further ensure the draft Action Plan is reflective of the needs and aspirations of LGBTIQ+ communities, a series of five stakeholder workshops were held which considered barriers to LGBTIQ+ inclusion and focused on developing actions to support the outcomes and strategies proposed by the Advisory Committee (further details in Section 5 – Consultation and Stakeholders).



4.11 Actions within the draft Plan have also reflected the recommendations made through the Rainbow Tick Accreditation process for Council’s Aged Care Services. The service received its renewed Rainbow Tick Accreditation in September 2023, with the assessors determining that all six standards were met (standards relate to: organisational capability, workforce development, consumer participation, welcoming and accessible organisation, disclosure and documentation, and culturally safe and acceptable).

4.12 Recommendations for quality improvements were made in four of the Rainbow Tick standard categories as follows:

Rainbow Tick Standard	Quality Improvement Recommendations (summary)
Organisational capability	Consider enhancing the visibility of LGBTIQ inclusion symbols and messages on the CoPP website and the staff intranet (Refer Actions 1.4 and 1.5). Consider extending beyond the Rainbow Tick accredited aged services programs, to make LGBTIQ Inclusion training mandatory for all CoPP staff (Refer Action 5.5).
Workforce development	Consider applying the lens of Rainbow Tick across CoPP in order to consolidate and continuously improve the existing commitment to LGBTIQ inclusion (beyond aged care). (Refer Action 1.9).
Disclosure and documentation	Service Documents/Records: Consider reviewing the privacy and confidentiality policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure the consistency of information provided. (Associated with Actions 1.4 and 1.10).
Culturally safe and acceptable	Risk Management Documents/Records: Consider scheduling a regular audit to ensure that the risk of a breach of cultural safety for LGBTIQ clients and staff is clearly documented, for example: regarding misgendering, discrimination, bullying. (Refer Action 1.10).

Action Plan Content: Principles, Outcomes and Strategies

4.13 The structure and content of the draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan is set out below.

4.14 The Plan includes a commitment statement to LGBTIQA+ communities which is reflected by the vision for ‘an inclusive City where diverse LGBTIQA+ communities are connected, safe and welcome’. Engagement will specifically seek feedback on this vision and commitment statement.

4.15 Principles guide Council’s approach to LGBTIQA+ inclusion and delivering on the vision which are summarised below:

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15 MARCH 2023



- Human rights and social justice
- Cohesive, measurable & accountable
- Diversity and intersectionality
- Nothing for us or about us without us
- Pride and visibility
- Self-determination, connection and pride for First Nations people.

4.16 Five focus areas define the desired outcomes, and the associated roles Council will play. Each outcome statement is supported by a set of strategies and actions.

Table 1: Outcomes and Strategies in draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan

Outcome & Council's Role	Strategies
<p>Focus Area 1 Council as a service provider</p> <p>Outcome - Inclusive, accessible and affirming services promote LGBTIQA+ people's full and equal participation in community life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and promote the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ communities through appropriate and inclusive Council services and programs • Improve opportunities for LGBTIQA+ people to connect in culturally safe spaces and events • Ensure welcoming and inclusive Council contact points • Ensure active engagement with LGBTIQA+ communities in Council processes
<p>Focus Area 2 Council as an ally</p> <p>Outcome - LGBTIQA+ diversity and participation are enhanced and visible in the City of Port Phillip</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise and celebrate Port Phillip's LGBTIQA+ communities • Facilitating networking and education between Council, service providers, business, schools and community organisations • Support LGBTIQA+ spaces, organisations and people to build social connection and participation
<p>Focus Area 3 Council as a leader</p> <p>Outcome - A safe, equitable and affirming place for LGBTIQA+ people and their families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value the lived experience and improve data collection about our diverse LGBTIQA+ communities, to inform Council decision-making about ways to advance equality and inclusion • Advocate for the rights of LGBTIQA+ people to be safe and to fully participate in the life in the City, and to be free from discrimination • Promote a community that is inclusive and respects LGBTIQA+ people's full and equal participation in community life
<p>Focus Area 4 Council as a consumer</p> <p>Outcome - Local businesses and Council procurement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote social procurement that is inclusive of LGBTIQA+ owned or operated businesses and LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice in suppliers • Increase opportunities and expand markets for LGBTIQA+ inclusive business



Outcome & Council's Role	Strategies
activities promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion	
<p>Focus Area 5 Council as a workplace Outcome - A proud and welcoming LGBTIQ+ inclusive workplace that is culturally safe, affirming and reflective of Port Phillip's diverse communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide inclusive people and culture systems and practices that actively seek feedback to inform continuous improvement • Enhance knowledge of LGBTIQ+ inclusion and literacy about the needs of our diverse communities for leaders, all staff and targeted service areas • Provide LGBTIQ+ inclusive recruitment and management practices

4.17 Actions to support the delivery of these outcome and strategies are detailed in the draft Action Plan provided at Attachment 1.

4.18 This includes recommendations for continuous improvement arising through the Rainbow Tick Accreditation of Council's aged care services in September 2022.

4.19 These recommendations included advice on the application of Rainbow Tick Standards across wider services delivered by Council, which was to 'apply the lens' of Rainbow Tick across services in order to 'consolidate and continuously improve the existing commitment to LGBTIQ inclusion'.

4.20 Action 1.5 in the draft Action Plan defines the proposed approach which is to: 'Develop and implement a schedule to apply the lens of Rainbow Tick Standards across Council services and identify services where formal accreditation would deliver additional value (Delivery 2023-2026)'.

4.21 This approach seeks to ensure a well-considered, proportionate and targeted approach to applying Rainbow Tick Standards to maximise the community benefit of LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

4.22 It is now recommended that Council release the draft Action Plan and invite community members and stakeholders to provide feedback to ensure it is fit-for-purpose prior to considering formal adoption in July 2022.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee has guided the development of the draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, with the contribution of a diversity of lived experience.

5.2 The development of the draft Action Plan has also been informed by a series of five facilitated engagement workshops with:

5.2.1 External stakeholders drawing from LGBTIQ+ agencies and services operating in Port Phillip

5.2.2 Council's employee Pride Network

5.2.3 Internal staff working across services that can progress LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

These workshops sought to inform LGBTIQ+ inclusion through understanding peoples experiences of barriers to inclusion and to identifying priorities for action.



5.3 Workshops identified the following priorities:

- Taking an intersectional approach to all LGBTIQA+ measures.
- Progressing inclusion through consultation and collaboration with subject matter experts and persons with lived experience.
- Importance of further education, training and capacity building (incl. staff and business community).
- Advocating at a local, state and federal level for LGBTIQA+ inclusion.
- Expanding the signalling of resources and allyship (e.g. signage).

5.3 The outcomes, strategies and actions of the draft Action Plan are reflective of these priorities.

5.4 Release the draft Action Plan for community members and stakeholders to provide feedback is now proposed, prior to its formal adoption. The proposed engagement activities are outlined in section 11 of this report.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The development of an LGBTIQA+ Action Plan will help Council ensure it fulfils its obligations under legislation including:

- Gender Equality Act (2020)
- The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- The Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 2019.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Development of the draft Action Plan has been undertaken essentially in-house, through allocation of a part-time staff resource. An independent facilitator was appointed to conduct the engagement workshops with internal and external stakeholders, involving direct budget expenditure.

7.2 Effective implementation of the Action Plan will require on-going staff resourcing, noting this will be integrated with related Council activities promoting diversity and inclusion across Council activities to achieve both synergies and efficiencies.

7.3 Actions within the draft Plan will be delivered across the organisations to ensure LGBTIQA+ inclusion is embedded. This can be achieved within existing program and service budgets, noting the need to allocate staff time.

7.4 Annual operating budget is specifically allocated to support the activities of Council's employee Pride Network, including their role in leading events and recognition of days of significance for our LGBTIQA+ communities.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 The Action Plan has no direct environmental impacts.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan will help ensure that Council's services are responsive, inclusive and equitable. It also facilitates cultural change in the broader community,



helping to reduce discrimination and disadvantage by creating a safe and affirming place for LGBTIQ+ people and their families. The actions in the plan will support LGBTIQ+ people's full and equal participation in community life.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 The development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan aligns to Strategic Direction 1 *Inclusive Port Phillip* in the Council Plan 2021 – 2031 as follows:

- Strategic Objective: “A City that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.”
- Four Year Strategies: “Port Phillip is more accessible and welcoming for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities” and “Port Phillip is a place where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can access services and facilities that enhance health and wellbeing through universal and targeted programs that address inequities”.

10.2 The Council Plan also commits to partner with its LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee (and other Advisory Committees) to ensure the diversity of our community's lived experience is represented in decision-making.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

11.1.1 Following this meeting, officers will promote opportunities for feedback on the draft Action Plan to ensure it aligns with community needs and aspirations. This will occur across a four-week period between 17 March and 17 April 2023. Key activities will include:

- Promoting the draft Action Plan on Council's Have Your Say website and at Town Halls, Libraries and Community Centres.
- Promoting the draft Action Plan at the Victorian Pride Centre and through wider LGBTIQ+ networks, including relevant service providers and agencies.
- Inviting participation from diverse and intersectional groups by using Council's networks (including Community Sector News) and engaging with Council's other Advisory Committees (including Older Persons, Youth, Multicultural and Multifaith).
- Engaging the local business community, including via Council's Business Advisory Group and Trader organisations.
- Using scheduled Neighbourhood Engagements Sessions that fall within the consultation period to promote the draft Action Plan and opportunities for community feedback. An additional pop-up engagement session is also planned for the South Melbourne Market (due to timing).

11.1.2 It is anticipated that a summary of community feedback and any revisions to the draft Action Plan will be presented for Council consideration in July 2023, prior to adoption.

11.2 COMMUNICATION



- 11.2.1 The City of Port Philip has the equal highest representation of people identifying as part of the LGBTIQ+ community of all municipalities across Victoria. An estimated 26% of all adult residents identify as LGBTIQ. This is significantly higher than the Victorian average of 14%.
- 11.2.2 This draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan will guide Council actions to support an LGBTIQ+ inclusive Port Phillip.
- 11.2.3 Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee has played a key role in the development of the draft Plan to ensure it represents the voices and considers the lived experience of our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities.
- 11.2.4 Council has also engaged with external stakeholders and Council's employee Pride Network and staff to development the Plan.
- 11.2.5 The consultation process on the draft Plan aims for a broad reach and is seeking feedback from across LGBTIQ+ communities, networks, allies, and the wider Port Phillip community.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. **Draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2023-26 (Consultation Draft)**[↓](#)