



# LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee Annual Report

July 2023 to June 2024



Figure 1: The City of Port Phillip's annual Pride Flag Raising Ceremony in 2023.



## City of Port Phillip

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## Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Port Phillip LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

## About the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee was appointed by the City of Port Phillip in 2021 as part of its ongoing commitment to its Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) communities. The Committee provides advice and feedback to Council on matters that affect LGBTIQA+ residents, businesses and community members who live, work and visit the City. It steered the development of Council's first LGBTIQA+ Action Plan and continues to assist in its implementation.

The Committee's objectives include providing advice to Council:

- On policies, plans and services that impact LGBTIQA+ communities.
- On matters affecting the needs, interests and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ communities, including advocacy to other levels of government.
- On matters that affect LGBTIQA+ residents, businesses, creative organisations and community groups who live, work and visit the City.
- In relation to effective communication, engagement and consultation with LGBTIQA+ communities.
- On any other matters referred to the Committee by Council.

## Joint Message from the Chair and Previous Chair

We are thrilled to provide this message, on behalf of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, in support of the 2023-24 LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee Annual Report.

In April 2021, the City of Port Phillip endorsed the establishment of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, and in December 2021, representatives from the City of Port Phillip's lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual communities were appointed to the committee.

With a diverse, passionate group around the table, we hit the ground running.

## The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan

The first, and most important task, was to guide the development and implementation of the City of Port Phillip's LGBTIQA+ Action Plan. Consultation for the Action Plan was extensive, and representations from organisations, businesses, other Advisory Committees, and community were obtained to inform its development and creation.

The Action Plan built on the City's rich history of supporting and championing all members of its proud and vibrant communities. Back in May 1996, the City hosted a forum for the queer community. From this Forum, the Council adopted its 1996 Statement of Commitment to promote "a fair, just, tolerant and inclusive community". This Statement came from a long-standing awareness by the City of the importance of its queer and rainbow communities and their contribution to the economic, cultural and social development in the local area.

The responsibility for this legacy, set 27 years ago, has been allocated to and embraced by the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.

The Action Plan is focused on creating positive and lasting change for the City. It represents a critical opportunity for the Council to foster and stand by its commitment to ensuring that LGBTIQA+ communities are safe in Port Phillip. This goal has become even more important in recent times where it is necessary to uphold freedom of expression and identity by ensuring protection from violence and threats to personal safety.

The Action Plan is focused on ensuring that the City's LGBTIQA+ communities are seen, counted, understood, and celebrated, supporting them to live, work and thrive in Port Phillip.

## Other achievements

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee has utilised a variety of opportunities to ensure that the City's diverse identities and experiences are connected, and to champion a local community in which diversity, intersectionality, and inclusion are celebrated.

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee is proud to have made significant submissions on:

- the draft Accessibility Action Plan (2023-2025)
- co-signing a letter to the Council with the Multicultural Advisory Committee to support the "Yes" vote for the 2023 Australian *Indigenous Voice referendum*
- the draft Positive Ageing Policy (2023-2027).

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee is proud to have engaged in the following significant work:

- working with the City to develop a Pride Program and protocols for Pride Flag raising ceremonies
- conducting a Councillor workshop on 12 October 2022
- providing advice in 2023 and 2024 on the Council's Notice of Motion tabled on 21 June 2023
- making budget submissions for 2022, 2023 and 2024.

**With thanks**

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee acknowledges the support, dedication and leadership provided by the City of Port Phillip's Community Building and Inclusion department. Their ongoing support and dedication have been pivotal to the committee's success. We also thank the Council's Employee Pride Network for their ongoing support and congratulate them on their work.

We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the support from other Advisory Committees, in particular, the Older Persons Advisory Committee and the Multicultural Advisory Committee. The support of other committees was vital as part of the advocacy for the establishment of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee. Further, these connections have enabled us to work collaboratively with our local communities to embed principles of intersectionality and diversity.

We also take a moment to acknowledge that throughout this journey, we have been appointed as representatives for our communities. We acknowledge that we do not speak in the place of all members of our queer communities, which are many and varied. Instead, our goal has been to work constructively, cooperatively and respectfully to achieve social change in the City.

We look forward to the year ahead – to continue working towards an inclusive City of Port Phillip where diverse LGBTIQA+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated.

Ange Barry (she/her)  
**Chair, 2024–**

Liam McAuliffe (he/him)  
**Chair, 2021–2024**

## Our LGBTIQA+ Community

City of Port Phillip has a proud history of supporting and championing the contribution of LGBTIQA+ communities to the social, economic and cultural life of the City. It has been the home of the annual Midsumma Pride March down Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, since it began in 1996. In the same year, Council made a Statement of Commitment to its LGBTIQ community (the statement currently misses the "A+" in the acronym), to support and recognise its significant LGBTIQ population and their contribution to cultural, economic and social development in the municipality.

In 2021, the Victorian Pride Centre opened in St Kilda, as Australia's first purpose-built LGBTIQA+ centre. The Pride Centre serves as a hub for LGBTIQA+ groups and organisations to share ideas and resources and to further their work in supporting diversity, equity and inclusion across Victoria.

City of Port Phillip is home to one of the highest rates of same-sex couples in Victoria, with the 2021 Census indicating that 5.1 per cent of couples residing in Port Phillip are same sex. The City has one of the largest LGBTIQA+ communities in Victoria, including supporters and allies, who help progress equality and fairness for all. Precise data relating to the presence of LGBTIQA+ communities in Port Phillip is limited by the information collected through the national Census of

Population and Housing undertaken every five years. It is hoped that enhanced information will become available through the 2026 Census.

Despite the progress that has been made for LGBTIQA+ inclusion in recent decades, LGBTIQA+ communities continue to face discrimination and marginalisation. These issues contribute to LGBTIQA+ people experiencing disproportionately poorer health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes than others in the community. This includes higher rates of mental health concerns, suicide and drug use, as well as poorer life satisfaction and general health than the general population (Victorian Local Government Association, 2020).



Figure 2: The Victorian Pride Centre in St Kilda in 2023, on the day of the annual Midsumma Pride March down Fitzroy Street.

## Policy Context

### LGBTIQA+ Action Plan

The City of Port Phillip's LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26, steered by Council's LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, was endorsed on 19 July 2023. It identifies opportunities for Council to

recognise the needs and aspirations for LGBTIQA+ people in the municipality and guides Council decisions about its role in embedding LGBTIQA+ inclusion.

It is Council's first LGBTIQA+ Action Plan and focuses on responding to the specific needs, diversity and vulnerabilities of LGBTIQA+ people. The Plan contains 39 actions for Council to implement that focus on its five key roles as a service provider, ally, leader, consumer and workplace. The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee played a key role in the Action Plan's development and continues to assist in its implementation.

Relevant policy and legislation relating to LGBTIQA+ discrimination and inclusion and the Committee's work in pursuing best practice are described in table 1.

**Table 1:** Relevant Policy and Legislation to LGBTIQA+ Discrimination, Inclusion and the Committee's work

<p><b>State</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>, which sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria.</li> <li>• <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their disability.</li> <li>• <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i>, which aims to make public life free from discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.</li> <li>• <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>, which places obligations on public sector entities to plan, measure and track progress to improve gender equality.</li> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, which outlines the role and responsibilities of local governments in Victoria.</li> <li>• <i>Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022-32</i>, Victoria's first whole-of-government LGBTIQA+ strategy that provides the vision and plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse LGBTIQA+ communities within all aspects of government work over the next decade.</li> <li>• <i>Rainbow Ready roadmap for local government – A guide for local governments to become more LGBTIQA+ inclusive and deliver on their commitment to drive LGBTIQA+ inclusion through Victoria's whole-of-government LGBTIQA+ strategy.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>City of Port Phillip</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility Action Plan</li> <li>• Gender Equality Action Plan</li> <li>• Integrated Council Plan 2021-2031</li> <li>• LGBTIQA+ Action Plan</li> <li>• Positive Ageing Policy</li> <li>• Reconciliation Action Plan</li> <li>• Welcoming Cities commitment</li> </ul>



# LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee

## Membership 2023-24

The Committee membership aims to reflect the diversity of the LGBTIQ+ community in Port Phillip. When recruitment occurred in 2021, the selection criteria required nominees to work, study or reside in the City of Port Phillip. As far as practicable, the composition of community members was sought to reflect the diversity within the LGBTIQ+ community itself.

Members were selected on the basis of their:

- Identification as LGBTIQ+
- Capacity to consult with the LGBTIQ+ community and represents a wide range of views
- Understanding of the needs of the LGBTIQ+ community
- Capacity to analyse information and provide advice on issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community

Following this selection process, Council appointed persons to the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee. Table 2 below illustrates those who sat on the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee in 2023-24.

The Terms of Reference allow for up to two Councillor representatives to sit on the committee. In March 2023, Councillor Nyaguy and Councillor Martin were appointed as Councillor representatives on the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee.

The Terms of Reference also provide for a Chair and Deputy Chair to be appointed from among its members. Liam McAuliffe served as the inaugural Chair for two terms until March 2024, with Ange Barry being elected as the next Chair. Shaun Williams served as the inaugural Deputy Chair until retiring in December 2023, with Felicity McIntosh being elected Deputy Chair from May 2024.

**Table 2:** Community members, officer bearers and Council representatives on the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee in 2023-24.

Member	Position
Justine Dalla Riva	Committee member from December 2021
James Seow	Committee member from December 2021
Liam McAuliffe	Committee member from December 2021
Dianne Toulson	Committee member from December 2021
Katie Lockett	Committee member from May 2023 until retirement in July 2023
David Demmer	Committee member from December 2021 until retirement in March 2024

Ange Barry	Committee member from December 2021
Felicity McIntosh	Committee member from December 2021
<b>Office Bearers</b>	<b>Position</b>
Liam McAuliffe	Inaugural Chair until March 2024
Shaun Williams	Inaugural Deputy Chair until retirement in December 2023
Ange Barry	Chair from March 2024
Felicity McIntosh	Deputy Chair from May 2024
<b>Council Representative</b>	<b>Ward</b>
Cr Peter Martin	Gateway Ward
Cr Robbie Nyaguy	Lake Ward

## Acknowledging Former Members and Office Bearers

Council and the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee thank the following retiring members for bringing their commitment, knowledge and experience to the committee. Their activism and passion for supporting the LGBTIQA+ community was invaluable.

- Katie Lockett
- David Demmer
- Rebeckah Loveday
- Coco Dwyer
- Shaun Williams, former Deputy Chair
- Katherine Copsy, former City of Port Phillip Councillor and representative on the Committee.

Additionally, Council and the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee thank Liam McAuliffe for taking on the Chair role since the committee's first meeting in February 2022 until March 2024. His leadership, professionalism and advocacy have been much appreciated over his tenure.



Figure 3: LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee members at a Councillor workshop in October 2022. From left to right: Ange Barry, Felicity McIntosh, David Demmer, Rebeckah Loveday, Liam McAuliffe, Shaun Williams and James Seow.

## Consultation on Council Engagement Topics

Council recognises the value of community committees as noted in the Council Plan: *“We will partner with our Older Persons Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Multicultural Advisory Committee, Multifaith Network, LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and establish other committees, where relevant, to ensure the diversity of our community’s experience is represented in decision-making.”*

From July 2023 to June 2024, the Committee provided input into the following engagement topics:

- Draft Spatial Economic and Employment Framework (SEEF)
- Shaping the Future of South Melbourne Market
- Supporting Positive Ageing in Port Phillip – Aged Care Reforms
  - This particular engagement contributed towards action **1.8** from the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan – *enable the voice of LGBTIQ+ communities in engagement on*

*planning and reviews of Council services, including through the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.*

- South Melbourne Structure Plan
- Draft Council Plan and Budget (Year 4)

The below table illustrates high-level themes and issues raised by the committee in response to various engagement topics.

**Table 3:** General themes and issues raised by the committee in response to engagement topics.

<b>Draft Spatial Economic and Employment Framework (SEEF)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The framework needing to give more attention to Fitzroy Street and its revitalisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Shaping the Future of South Melbourne Market</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring safe and accessible infrastructure, including the provision of all gender bathrooms and self-contained toilets.</li> <li>• The need for traders to implement inclusive business practices, e.g. ensuring respectful behaviours in their code of conduct and providing appropriate training for staff.</li> <li>• Additional recommended improvements for infrastructure included bike racks, quiet spaces and more outdoor eating areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Positive Ageing in Port Phillip – Aged Care Reforms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to educate and support older people in the transition as well as their support networks.</li> <li>• The need for Council to advocate for its current clients in ensuring that it would be a smooth transition process.</li> <li>• Advising Council to advocate for quality assurance reporting that includes LGBTIQA+ people, as currently this reporting relies on Census data. LGBTIQA+ people are not currently captured in Census data, thus alternative ways to capture the experience of LGBTIQA+ service users should be sought.</li> <li>• Formal accreditation of services with diversity and inclusion considerations can be great, but not necessarily a perfect solution to inclusive services. Having appropriate policies such as a gender affirmation policy or gender and diversity plan can contribute to new providers being inclusive without necessarily being accredited.</li> </ul>
<b>South Melbourne Structure Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering how Council’s LGBTIQA+ Action Plan can be incorporated into the Structure Plan.</li> </ul>

## Advocacy

The Committee has advocated on other topics or items relevant to Council, illustrated in table 4.

**Table 4:** Topics or issues that the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee has advocated on.

<p><b>Notice of Motion regarding the safe delivery of LGBTIQ+ Programs, Events and Recognition</b></p>
<p>On 21 June 2023, Council moved a Notice of Motion to reaffirm its commitment to the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people in the community and to condemn far right terrorism and hate speech perpetuated against the LGBTIQ+ community as well as their allies and supporters. It required Council to continue to work with the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, Victorian Pride Centre, Municipal Association of Victoria, Victoria Police and other key bodies on the safe delivery of LGBTIQ+ programs, community events and recognition moving forward.</p> <p>This Notice of Motion was tabled in LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee meetings in its August, September and November 2023 meetings, as well as its May 2024 meeting. The Committee provided a range of advice on the topic, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the impacts of postponed or cancelled events on the community and performers.</li> <li>• Strategies to use in effectively planning, organising and running an event that may come with backlash, protestors/disruptors or hate speech.</li> <li>• Having a thorough risk assessment to minimise the chance of events being cancelled.</li> <li>• Working and developing closer relationships with Victoria Police, Rainbow Community Angels, other local governments and Municipal Association Victoria.</li> <li>• Talking to the right level of leadership when consulting with organisations, as decisions made by those more senior in organisations may overrule the advice of those who are consulted with.</li> </ul> <p>This advocacy has contributed to action <b>3.1</b> from the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee to identify and respond to issues and opportunities related to LGBTIQ+ inclusion and collaborate with other advisory committees to support intersectionality.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement on Event Planning – Action from LGBTIQ+ Action Plan</b></p>
<p>Action <b>1.2</b> from the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan stipulates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engage the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee in the planning of key mainstream festivals and events, to ensure such events are safe, welcoming and inclusive, including through promotion and programming.</i></li> </ul> <p>In the September 2023 meeting, Council’s Events team met with the Committee to discuss the planning of St Kilda Festival and St Kilda Film Festival for 2024. Discussion points raised by the committee included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially collaborating with Minus18 around the programming of events for youth at St Kilda Festival, noting that the festival comes at the end of Midsumma so there may be reduced capacity for involvement.</li> <li>• Opportunities for outdoor programming at the Pride Centre for St Kilda Film Festival, noting that weather is an issue as the festival takes place during winter.</li> <li>• Having representation from people of colour, LGBTIQ+ and First Nations communities in the Film Festival, noting the importance of highlighting different lived experiences and diverse backgrounds.</li> </ul> <p>In the June 2024 meeting, Council’s Events team met with the Committee again to discuss the planning of St Kilda Festival for 2025. Discussion points raised by the committee included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the event can be safe with the provision of alcohol.</li> <li>• How LGBTIQ+ communities be safe at the event and protected from vilification.</li> </ul>

- How LGBTIQ+ artists and queer artists of colour can be highlighted and promoted in the festival's line-up, as opposed to 'othering' them.
- What the guiding documents and policies are used to ensure inclusive and effective programming for the event.

#### Voice to Parliament referendum

The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee co-signed a letter to the Council with the Multicultural Advisory Committee to support the Yes vote.

## Other Committee Activities

**Table 5:** Other activities that LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee members have been part of.

Joint Advisory Committee Meeting
Liam McAuliffe and Ange Barry attended the second Joint Advisory Committee meeting on 10 August 2023. Representatives of the Multifaith Network, the Multicultural, Older Persons, Youth and LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committees met to discuss topics such as Welcoming Cities, relevant action plans and policies and opportunities for alignment and advocacy.
Advisory Committee End of Year Celebration
The end of year celebration for all advisory committees on 29 November 2023 acknowledged the dedicated service of members and celebrated their collective achievements. Liam McAuliffe and James Seow attended the event which provided an opportunity to network with other advisory committee members and volunteers.
Pride Flag Raising Ceremony
On 30 January 2024, Council hosted its annual Pride Flag Raising Ceremony ahead of the Midsumma Pride March that takes place on Fitzroy Street in St Kilda. Ange Barry, Felicity McIntosh and Justine Dalla Riva attended the ceremony where the flags were raised, LGBTIQ+ communities were celebrated and the important work still needed to combat discrimination was discussed.
International Women's Day
On 8 March 2024, Justine Dalla Riva attended Council's event for International Women's Day. This was a morning tea to launch the 'HerStory' map commemorating women in the City of Port Phillip. The map displays places in the City where women are recognised and honoured in street names, parks and gardens, buildings and on monuments and other public artworks.
Meeting with City of Monash Officers
In the Committee's February 2024 meeting, officers from the City of Monash presented an overview of their LGBTIQ+ work. This was an opportunity to learn what another local government is doing in this space and share ideas and resources. City of Monash's own LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, LGBTIQ+ Action Plan and associated programs, events and activities were discussed.

## Acknowledgement

This report was prepared by the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, who endorsed the report on 5 July 2024.

