

2.3 **LGBTIQA+ ACTION PLAN**

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft *LGBTIQA+ Action Plan* for public exhibition and community feedback for a period of three (3) weeks. Following the period of public exhibition, the finalised plan is anticipated to be presented to Council in November 2022.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

Monash City Council's inaugural LGBTIQA+ Action plan is a four year framework with clear actions to better understand and respond to the experiences and rights of the LGBTIQA+ community. As with everyone in our community, the LGBTIQA+ community deserves to have full and equal participation in community life. However, despite significant improvement in recent years, the LGBTIQA+ community in Victoria continues to face barriers that see LGBTIQA+ people not afforded the same rights and dignity as the broader community. As the closest level of government to the community, City of Monash is perfectly positioned to celebrate diversity, promote social inclusion and raise the LGBTIQA+ community profile to help address health and wellbeing needs, equity, safety and access across Monash.

Monash's very first LGBTIQA+ Action Plan represents a deliberate and significant commitment in our journey towards raising the LGBTIQA+ community profile and improving safety, visibility, social inclusion and the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people in Monash.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan will be delivered within existing resources. Where additional resources are required, they will be sought through Council's annual budget process or via external funding opportunities.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

This report seeks Council endorsement of the *LGBTIQA+ draft Action Plan* for public exhibition and community feedback for a period of three (3) weeks from 28 September – 19 October 2022.

LGBTIQA+ ACTION PLAN

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the draft LGBTIQA+ Action Plan for public exhibition and community feedback for a period of three (3) weeks, 28 September – 19 October 2022.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft *LGBTIQA+ Action Plan (Attachment 1)* for public exhibition and community feedback for a period of three (3) weeks. Following the period of public exhibition, the finalised plan is anticipated to be presented to Council in November 2022.

BACKGROUND

Council has had a long-standing commitment to equity and inclusion and over the years has provided a range of programs and activities to ensure it meets the needs of our LGBTIQA+ community. Following the recent debates around Marriage Equality and in response to calls from community members for Council to better recognise, represent and connect with LGBTIQA+ members, Council previously undertook a needs assessment with our LGBTIQA+ community. This included a literature review, community consultation, service provider consultation and a report with recommendations that were endorsed in 2018.

Since then, Council has taken a range of steps to be more inclusive including: providing LGBTIQA+ inclusive training to staff; hosting events for IDAHOBIT Day; developing an LGBTIQA+ advisory committee and appointing a dedicated LGBTIQA+ Partnership Officer.

In order to further progress this work, Council resolved to develop an inaugural LGBTIQA+ action plan in consultation with the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.

The LGBTIQA+ action plan seeks to build on the work we have already achieved, reinforce our commitment to LGBTIQA+ inclusion, incorporate the latest research, community consultations and considerations of intersectionality and incorporate related policies, plans and legislation. This

will include the Victorian whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy, Pride in our Future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2022-32.

DISCUSSION

Monash's inaugural LGBTIQ+ four year Action Plan represents a deliberate and significant commitment in our journey towards raising the LGBTIQ+ community profile and improving safety, visibility, social inclusion and the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people in Monash.

The four-year plan includes actions under four priority areas:

Priority Area 1: Welcoming and celebrating diversity

Priority Area 2: Enhancing safety, access and participation

Priority Area 3: Inclusive organisation reflective of its diverse community

Priority Area 4: Equitable, inclusive, and accessible services and facilities

Council endorsement will be sought to go out for further community consultation for a period of three (3) weeks. This will include further engagement with Council's Advisory Committees and a community survey. Once this consultation is complete, relevant feedback will be integrated into a final version to be tabled for Council's consideration.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As LGBTIQ+ inclusion, well-being and equality is an issue across all council areas, there are several related council policies and strategies that reflect the LGBTIQ+ action plan.

These include:

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Monash Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Monash Gender Equity Framework
- Monash Loneliness Framework 2021 – 2025
- Monash Social Housing Framework
- Active Monash Sports Club Framework 2022-2027
- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Community Safety Framework

**please refer to the background paper for further information*

CONSULTATION

Extensive community consultation has been conducted to inform the LGBTIQ+ Action plan. This includes online survey, community focus groups, LGBTIQ+ service provider interviews and a feedback board. (Attachment 2

– Community Consultation Phase One Report). Within the organisation we sought internal feedback through a LGBTIQ+ knowledge and competency survey that had over 100 responses. Community responses were then themed, and we consulted with teams across the City of Monash to discuss and commit to key actions to ensure buy in and accountability.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan will have a positive impact on the lives of LGBTIQ+ people, their families, and the community more broadly. The work will promote human rights, gender equality and a reduction in gender based violence and discrimination.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan is directly seeking to improve human rights outlined in The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 which centre broadly into the four themes of Freedom; Respect; Equality; and Dignity.

“While all international human rights are relevant, some rights are particularly relevant to the LGBTIQ+ community. For example, the right to privacy and the right to non-discrimination.

The right to privacy:

Under international law, everyone has the right to privacy and should be able to freely express their identity in their relationships with others or by themselves. Specific examples of the right to privacy include: the right to legally engage in same-sex sexual activity, and the right to have legal recognition of your gender reassignment without having to undergo excessive restrictive requirements.

The right to non-discrimination:

Equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights that belong to all people. Under international law, you cannot be discriminated against because of your sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression”. (ref: [LGBTIQ+-International-Human-Rights-Factsheet.pdf \(legalaid.wa.gov.au\)](#))

GENDER EQUITY ASSESSMENT

An intersectional gender lens has been applied throughout the development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan as it has a direct and significant impact on the Monash Community. Due to the nature of the action plan, the collection of data and consultation in itself always held gender at the forefront.

The key audience for the plan and the consultation is to promote equality in the LGBTIQ+ community which will benefit the whole of Monash communities.

The GIA ensured that we:

- Collected demographic information including information on gender, sexual orientation, Country of Birth, cultural identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander, age, disability.
- Provided different mechanisms for consultation. Face to Face, online survey's, feedback walls, key informant interviews, informal and formal feedback to strengthen the consultation process.
- Intersectionality, Community Voice, and Access and Inclusion are key principles of the Action Plan.
- Consulted Monash's Advisory Committees.
- Consulted and gained commitment from 23 different teams across council to ensure a whole of Council approach and that intersectionality was a key consideration. This includes across the age spectrum – Child, Youth and Families, through to Positive Ageing; Community Strengthening including staff representatives from the Multi-cultural, Disability, Gender and LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee's as well as the draft Reconciliation Action Plan.

We note that almost one in three (30%) participants reported living with a disability or long-term health condition which will need to be a key consideration on how we deliver the action plan.

CONSULTATION

The next round of consultations will be via online survey for a period of 3 weeks. The survey will be promoted through the City of Monash formal and informal communication channels.

This includes:

- Shape Monash
- Monash Bulletin
- Social Media pages
- LGBTIQ+, Gender, Disability and Multi-cultural Advisory Committees
- Grant recipients

The consultation will provide an opportunity for the community, in particular LGBTIQ+ community and allies, to provide feedback on the draft plan. Feedback will then be analysed and appropriate changes made to produce the final document.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan will be delivered within existing resources. Where additional resources are required they will be sought through Council's annual budget process or via external funding opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan has been prepared for Council consideration and community consultation.

The draft plan reflects Council's commitment to gender diversity and equity and to improving the lives of the LGBTIQ+ community. It is anticipated that the final LGBTIQ+ Action Plan will be tabled for Council's consideration at its meeting on 29 November 2022 after review of public feedback.