

**2.1 RAINBOW TICK PROGRESS**

(Authors: JT/TE)

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins, Community Services

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*****PURPOSE***

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on its progress towards Rainbow Tick accreditation.

***KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES***

In August 2021, Council made the commitment to work towards achieving Rainbow Tick accreditation and outlined a plan. Rainbow Tick accreditation is not a simple 'tick the box' process. It requires significant amounts of work from all areas of Council to achieve cultural and organisational change.

Key considerations to note include:

- An LGBTIQ+ Working Group was formed to identify gaps in LGBTIQ+ inclusion using Rainbow Health Australia's initial audit tool.
- The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan has been developed and endorsed by Council in November 2022.
- The Rainbow Tick Plan, designed to assist staff in implementing internal changes and collating evidence, has been developed and endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- Council Departments and the LGBTIQ+ Working Group have completed, and continue to work on, agreed actions.
- Select service areas will be required to complete Department specific actions to ensure readiness for accreditation.

***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The Rainbow Tick Plan can be implemented within existing staff and operational budgets.

***CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION***

This report seeks Council to note the progress of the organisation on working towards Rainbow Tick accreditation.

**RAINBOW TICK PROGRESS**

(Authors: JT/TE)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council notes the progress of the organisation's journey towards Rainbow Tick accreditation.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on its progress, since the previous Council resolution in August 2021, towards Rainbow Tick accreditation and the alignment with existing LGBTIQ+ work including Council's inaugural LGBTIQ+ Action Plan. It is important to note that Council's understanding of the Rainbow Tick process has significantly improved since August 2021 and the timeline outlined in this report reflects the increased understanding of the amount of important work required and the time needed to complete these.

**BACKGROUND**

In August 2021, Council made the commitment to work towards achieving Rainbow Tick accreditation which would ensure Monash is a safe, inclusive, and respectful organisation for Council employees, service users and the broader Monash community. Rainbow Tick accreditation is not a simple 'tick the box' process. It requires significant amounts of work from all areas of Council to achieve cultural and organisational change.

**DISCUSSION**

Rainbow Tick accreditation is an evidence-based assessment completed by independent accreditors. The standards and indicators are part of the Rainbow Tick Framework developed by Rainbow Health Australia.

In early 2022 Council established an internal LGBTIQ+ Working Group which consists of staff representatives from across all Divisions to support the Rainbow Tick process.

The initial internal audit process was conducted by the LGBTIQ+ Working Group to identify gaps, which took significantly more time than initially anticipated to ensure whole of organisation buy-in. Through this time, the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan was developed and in November 2022, Council endorsed its inaugural LGBTIQ+ Action Plan. The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan sets out clear actions to strengthen our understanding of, and capacity, to respond to the experiences and rights of LGBTIQ+ people that live, work and/or play within the City of Monash. The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan was developed in close consultation with the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and was officially launched at Active Monash's *Active Pride* event in March 2023.

Table 1 outlines which priority areas from the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan align with the Rainbow Tick Standards.

Table 1

<b>LGBTIQ+ Action Plan Priority Areas</b>	<b>Rainbow Tick Standards</b>
1. Welcoming and celebrating diversity	4
2. Enhancing safety, access and participation	4 and 6
3. Inclusive organisation reflective of its diverse community	1, 2 and 5
4. Equitable, inclusive and accessible services and facilities	4 and 6

The Rainbow Tick six standards are:

1. **Organisational capability:** The organisation embeds LGBTIQ-inclusive practice across all its systems and continuously seeks opportunities for improvements.
2. **Workforce development:** All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities to LGBTIQ+ service users and are trained and able to deliver LGBTIQ+ inclusive services.
3. **Consumer participation:** LGBTIQ+ service users are consulted about, and participate in the planning, development, and review of the service.
4. **A welcoming and accessible organisation:** LGBTIQ+ service users can easily and confidently access services because the physical and virtual environments, including information, structures, resources, and processes, are welcoming.
5. **Disclosure and documentation:** LGBTIQ+ service users, staff and volunteers feel safe to provide personal information, including their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or intersex status, because they know information will be treated respectfully and that there are systems in place to ensure their privacy.
6. **Culturally safe and acceptable services:** Services and programs identify, assess, analyse, and manage risks to ensure the cultural safety of LGBTIQ service users.

Rainbow Health Australia's 'How2' training program is designed to assist organisations embed LGBTIQ+ inclusion in a sustainable way and provide guidance on how to implement change that will assist in gaining Rainbow Tick accreditation. Due to the comprehensive and time-consuming nature of the development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, staff have not yet undertaken Rainbow Health Australia's training program. Currently, key Council staff have submitted an Expression of Interest with Rainbow Health Australia noting that there is high demand for places in the training program.

Since the endorsement of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, work has continued across all Divisions on their agreed actions, many of which contribute to Rainbow Tick. It is intended that pilot Departments will be selected to be trialled for an accreditation assessment, with this anticipated to begin in 2024.

Upon the completion of the initial audit process, gaps were identified, and actions formed to address these in a way that has real and tangible outcomes where evidence can be provided. A number of these actions also align to Council's LGBTIQ+ Action Plan and additional actions have been developed for an organisation wide Rainbow Tick Plan.

The Rainbow Tick Plan is an internal facing document which provides a framework for officers to ensure actions are agreed to by the relevant Council Departments, achieved within a timely manner and that evidence is recorded for the purpose of providing it to the external accreditors. The Rainbow Tick Plan initially focusses on organisation-wide actions that need to be completed prior to focussing on specific Council service areas.

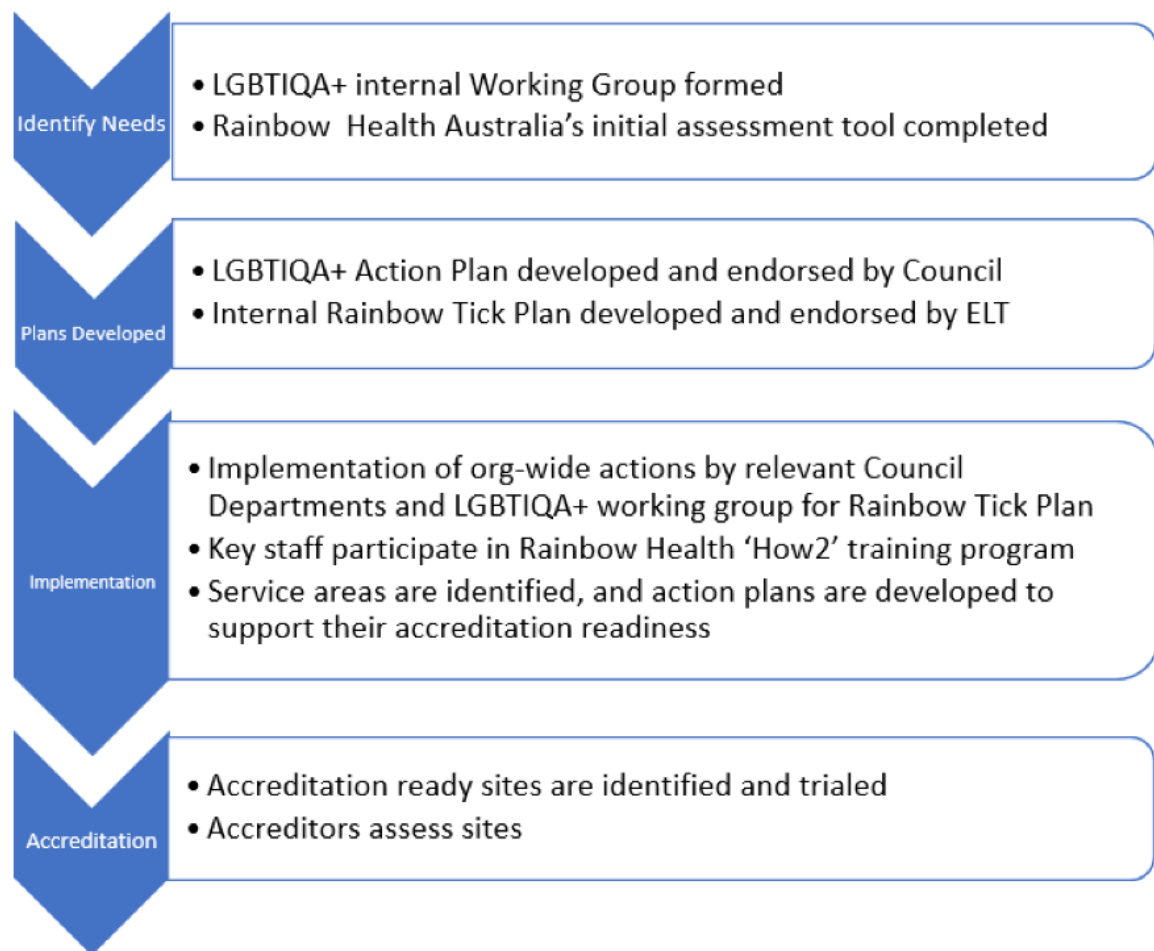
There are several actions which have already been completed during the first year of the Rainbow Tick Plan including:

- Developed a diversity statement that includes reference to LGBTIQ+ communities that can be displayed in relevant Council publications, policies and inside facilities.
- Continue to convene the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee to inform the development and review of policies, programs and services impacting on LGBTIQ+ people.
- Developed a dedicated LGBTIQ+ inclusion page on the staff intranet to provide information on the LGBTIQ+ working group initiatives, staff campaigns and support services.
- Profiled and celebrated LGBTIQ+ individuals with the City of Monash Sir John Monash awards.
- Promoted, supported and acknowledged LGBTIQ+ dates of significance through flying the Intersex inclusive progress pride flag, and lighting up the Civic Centre and Euneva car park.
- The LGBTIQ+ Partnerships Officer position successfully became a permanent on-going position in the 2023/24 Council budget.

In Phase 2 of the Rainbow Tick Plan, the 'pilot sites' or service areas will be required to complete additional Department specific actions to be ready for accreditation. These actions have been highlighted from completing the Rainbow Tick initial audit tool. It is important to note that there are eligibility requirements under Rainbow Tick Standards which are currently being reviewed by Rainbow Health Australia. Council Departments that provide health and community services are eligible to be accredited for Rainbow Tick. No other Council has achieved Rainbow Tick accreditation for all its health and community-run services at this time. There are also parts of the organisation that impact all staff that will be reviewed as part of the accreditation process including People and Safety, Communications, Corporate Performance and Governance.

Council's immediate priorities for Rainbow Tick includes increasing visibility and awareness in the community which includes actions such as lighting up Council buildings on dates of significance with a comprehensive communications plan developed to ensure this visibility is used as an education tool, providing education tools for staff such as a handbook on inclusive practice and developing a risk register that addresses concerns such as safety and privacy. Monash is at the beginning of the implementation stage, as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1



### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

By working towards Rainbow Tick, accreditation, Council will improve its sense of community and services for LGBTIQ+ communities in Monash and surrounding areas. Council will become a more welcoming and inclusive service provider for community members as actions taken will demonstrate that Council values their differences, celebrates them and encourages safety and respect for all. Council, as an employer, will become a more desirable workplace as potential employees are increasingly looking for workplaces that visibly demonstrate that they are an inclusive workplace which would allow them to be their authentic selves at work.

### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

Working towards Rainbow Tick accreditation is directly seeking to ensure that Council's services are welcoming and inclusive of our LGBTIQ+ communities to ensure they can participate fully in public life with the freedom and respect as the wider Monash community.

***GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT***

The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan and Rainbow Tick accreditation have a direct and significant impact on the Monash community as these initiatives involve changes to a range of services. Due to the nature of the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan and Rainbow Tick accreditation, with a focus on promoting equality in the LGBTIQA+ communities, an intersectional gender lens is at the forefront of this work. In developing the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan, a Gender Impact Assessment was conducted, and a range of actions were undertaken as a result, including:

- Collected demographic information including information on gender, sexual orientation, country of birth, cultural identity including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, age, and disability.
- Provided different mechanisms for consultation to strengthen the consultation process, such as; face-to-face, online surveys, feedback walls, key informant interviews, informal and formal feedback.
- Ensured 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 Multicultural, Disability, Gender and LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committees as well as the Reconciliation Action Plan.

As Rainbow Tick is progressed, a Gender Impact Assessment will be undertaken over specific actions or initiatives that form part of accreditation as required, to ensure that an intersectional gender lens continues to be applied to this work.

***CONSULTATION***

During the development of the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan in 2022, an extensive community consultation was undertaken to ensure the Monash community and particularly our LGBTIQA+ members had the opportunity to provide feedback. The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan was developed in close collaboration with the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.

The Rainbow Tick Plan, being an internal facing document, was developed in collaboration with the internal LGBTIQA+ Working Group following the Rainbow Tick audit. The Rainbow Tick Plan has been presented to the relevant Council departments for their feedback and input and recently been endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team.

***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The Rainbow Tick Plan can be met within existing staff and operational budgets.

***CONCLUSION***

This report seeks Council to note the progress of the organisation on working towards Rainbow Tick accreditation.