LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

RELATING TO LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

From a selection of published council plans and programs

PUBLIC COMMITMENT

**Publicly declare council’s support for LGBTIQ+ communities, affirming its intention to help create a welcoming and safe community and strive to prevent discrimination and abuse of such residents**

* Prepare a statement of commitment to the LGBTIQ+ community, pledging efforts to promote inclusion, access to services and programs, support personal and cultural expression, and recognize the contribution of LGBTIQ+ communities to the social, economic and cultural life of society
* Issue a formal affirmation of the Darlington Statement - a declaration by Australian and New Zealand intersex organizations, which voices support for intersex priorities

ASSEMBLING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

**Inform service development with research about relevant issues, demographic information, and a review of government policies and programs, coupled with consultation with LGBTIQ+ communities about their identities, experiences and needs, and collaboration in planning services.**

* Review research, census and other data, council’s engagement with LGBTIQ+ communities, its awareness of relevant issues, and consideration of LGBTIQ+ communities in council policies, plans and strategies
* Assemble evidence about LGBTIQ+ communities, including their diversity of identities, perceptions, priorities, experiences and circumstances, as well as consideration of the intersecting backgrounds and circumstances which may accentuate their experiences of isolation, discrimination and exclusion.
* Summarize and maintain this information, to build a growing understanding of the LGBTIQ+ community and inform policies and programs.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

**Ensure that LGBTIQ+ communities are consulted in the planning of general programs, policies and services, as well as in the development of specific programs to advance the welfare of LGBTIQ+ residents.**

* Consult with LGBTIQ+ agencies, groups and decision makers
* Develop consultation practices that ensure the voices of LGBTIQ+ staff in the development of policies, strategies and programs that affect them.
* Ensure community engagement processes involve the LGBTIQ+ community and that representatives of the LGBTTI communities are invited to attend relevant meetings and networks
* Conduct forum/s about LGBTIQ+ issues and inclusion, perhaps in collaboration with regional councils
* Ensure staff are able to form connections, and consult, with LGBTIQ+ communities and organizations
* Participate in relevant local government networks - including LG Pro Rainbow SIG

COLLABORATION

**Establish a process of regular and effective collaboration with LGBTIQ+ individuals and groups, including perhaps, through the establishment of, or regular contact with, an LGBTIQ+ advisory committee or reference group.**

* Collaborate and partner with LGBTIQ+ communities and residents
* Establish a local or regional LGBTIQ+ reference or advisory group, with terms of reference, guidelines on governance, reporting, decision making etc. – or work with an existing group - to advise council about its policies and services, advocate for LGBTIQ+ communities, consider funding opportunities, help council understand barriers to equality, and guide communication and consultation with LGBTIQ+ communities

COMMUNICATIONS

**Acknowledge LGBTIQ+ communities in communicating with the public and representing the community.**

* Increase LGBTIQ+ visibility, through arts, promotion, media and website
* Ensure communications reflect the diversity of the community, including appropriate visual representations of LGBTIQ+ communities in social, print, website and other media
* Assemble a selection of images of people of LGBTIQ+ communities, reflecting their diversity, for such use
* Create a presence of LGBTIQ+ communities and issues on the website
* Ensure communications proficiently use LGBTIQ+-inclusive language

CELEBRATION

**Recognize important dates, through staff events at work and promotion among the wider community, encouraging LGBTIQ+ participation in existing events as well as arranging local LGBTIQ+-specific activities.**

* Recognize and promote key days and events, for example IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia) and Midsumma.
* Promote participation in key public events with film screenings, wear it purple day, staff morning teas, community events, art shows and other local initiatives
* Encourage staff or residents' participation in midsummer festival and other major pride events
* Arrange staff events to raise money for Switchboard or another LGBTIQ+ organization, as a celebration of IDAHOBIT day
* Conduct an annual LGBTIQ+ flag raising ceremony
* Roll out rainbow stickers across council facilities

INFORMING THE COMMUNITY

**Inform the community about the nature, diversity, experiences, needs and rights of LGBTIQ+ communities.**

* Take steps to inform the community about LGBTIQ+ issues
* Convene discussions among faith leaders about sexuality and gender identity - perhaps through collaboration with the Faith Communities Council of Victoria or local interfaith group, and as part of a wider conversations
* Inform community groups about LGBTIQ+ issues. Sometimes a focus upon a specific issues of existing public concern, such as suicide prevention, may serve as a basis for such training

STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

**Involve staff in efforts to raise awareness and understanding of LGBTIQ+ communities.**

* Conduct regular meetings of staff engaged in, or supportive of, efforts to advance the welfare of LGBTIQ+ employees and to inform employees about LGBTIQ+ issues among the wider community as well
* Form an internal group to drive work and advocate internally for increased awareness, training and consideration in service planning and delivery
* Create staff engagement activities to inform employees and foster a supportive work environment
* Obtain Rainbow Tick accreditation within a particular department - such as aged and disability programs, or simply apply selected, important elements of the rainbow tick procedure to certain services
* Show inclusivity in the workplace with posters, rainbow lanyards and other visible measures
* Use gender-neutral language in conversations
* Provide training to support inclusive language and awareness to frontline staff
* Add a reference to LGBTIQ+ inclusion as a goal of council to the staff induction program
* Adjust methods for collecting data and otherwise monitoring experiences and conditions for LGBTIQ+ staff
* Ensure that LGBTIQ+ staff are able to participate in internal consultative processes

STAFF TRAINING

**Train staff in issues relating to policy development, service planning and delivery.**

* Train service delivery and planning staff - including in aged care, disability, family services and youth services, community development, arts and culture - to provide LGBTIQ+-sensitive services
* Provide staff training during corporate induction

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND CONTENT

**Conduct events and programs which show respect for, and raise the profile of, LGBTIQ+ communities – some incorporating LGBTIQ+-related content and others entirely focused upon LGBTIQ+ communities.**

* Foster increased community engagement by conducting events through libraries, arts and culture, aged, family, youth and other services, that acknowledge, and inform the public about, LGBTIQ+ communities
* Conduct programs directed to specific interests or concerns of LGBTIQ+ communities
* Extend support to LGBTIQ+ related projects and events being conducted by external organisations, through a community grants program.

GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY

**Provide services that are inclusive and welcoming of LGBTIQ+ communities.**

* Explore links with council advisory groups to identify ways to respond to intersectionality in LGBTIQ+ communities
* Create a welcoming environment for LGBTIQ+ people, as for example, with posters, brochures and images

SAFE SPACES AND VENUES

**Safe spaces may be created for members of the LGBTIQ+ communities, either as venues for activities, or as places LGBTIQ+ residents should be able to frequent in safety.**

* Promote safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ community
* Create safe venues and spaces for LGBTIQ+ communities, participating in Council-run or other activities

AGED CARE AND SUPPORT

**Develop inclusive aged care services, social activities and carers' support programs.**

* Develop a statement of commitment for aged services
* Incorporate LGBTIQ+ strategies in aged care plans
* Provide training on service delivery to LGBTIQ+ residents to aged care staff
* Obtain Rainbow Tick accreditation within the aged and disability unit
* Include LGBTIQ+ people in an aged advisory group
* Determine needs of older people through consultation
* Take positive steps to encourage participation of LGBTIQ+ communities in existing council services
* Promote inclusive aged care services to the LGBTIQ+ community through LGBTIQ+ media, website and local papers
* Sponsor and support an LGBTIQ+ carers group. Perhaps collaborate with Carers Victoria and an LGBTIQ+ organization with connections with the community, to establish a program to provide LGBTIQ+ carers with information, referrals and social support
* Organize a pilot social group for older LGBTIQ+ people in collaboration with key LGBTIQ+ organizations, involving them in codesigning the program to provide social support, connection to LGBTIQ+ support services, social groups and venues, as well as mainstream services, activities and outings, and advocacy activities
* Incorporate LGBTIQ+-related content and features in the annual senior’s festival
* Promote and support an LGBTIQ+ seniors dance group

FAMILY SERVICES

**Provide inclusive family services and programs**

* Provide training on service delivery to LGBTIQ+ residents to family services staff
* Establish a rainbow families playgroup, inviting interested parents to an informal discussion to plan its development
* Display 'Who is your family' or similar posters, as well as brochures and other inclusive information and images

LIBRARY CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

**Conduct LGBTIQ+-inclusive activities and stock books in the libraires of relevance and appeal to LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Conduct LGBTIQ+-relevant events at libraries, such as showcasing rainbow stories from local writers
* Stock LGBTIQ+ literature in the libraries
* Stock library books which reflect family diversity
* Include stories and images of rainbow families in newsletters and other resources

SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION

**Provide safe and supportive opportunities for recreation for members of LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Develop staff training through reputable LGBTIQ+ organizations, to help staff develop opportunities for participation in sport and physical recreation for LGBTIQ+ people, who may otherwise be excluded from such activities
* Schedule swim sessions and exercise classes with LGBTIQ+ people

ARTS AND CULTURE

**Schedule arts programs and exhibitions which give expression to LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Conduct art exhibitions or programs about LGBTIQ+ issues, family violence or gender equality, inclusive of LGBTIQ+ communities or featuring relevant themes
* Develop arts projects – perhaps led by LGBTIQ+ young people or other segments of the community - in collaboration with an LGBTIQ+ organization, such as Zoe Belle Collective

YOUTH SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

**Conduct programs for young people which promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion and social support**

* Conduct formal and fundraising or awareness activities within school settings
* Establish a social group for young people featuring school-based projects to promote inclusion - perhaps including modules about LGBTIQ+ experiences, leadership and conflict management; planning and conducing an event with students from other schools; and meetings to refine project ideas to achieve a whole-of-school approach. These may serve as a peer experience, youth-led and whole-of-school approach.
* Include LGBTIQ+ young people in youth-oriented events such as social groups, education programs, holiday programs and events
* Involve young people in participating in, or organizing, events for special days of relevance to LGBTIQ+ communities
* Invite LGBTIQ+ young people to join local youth groups in their 'out' identities, where they will be safe and free from discrimination
* To create a supportive and inclusive environment for young people, conduct co-design workshops with young people, promoted through schools, online networks and relevant organizations - such as Headspace, Minus18, queerspace, Ygender and YACVic - and embark upon activities such as production of short videos or pride banner workshops, and social outings

SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

**Organize social and support groups for LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Support LGBTIQ+ social networking
* Establish a social support group for young people
* Develop an LGBTIQ+ elders and allies’ social group and invite members to keep in touch on social media
* Promote and support and LGBTIQ+ seniors dance group
* Sponsor a LGBTIQ+ carers group

SERVICE INFORMATION FOR LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

**Disseminate information about supportive mainstream services and specialist services or support for LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Help connect LGBTIQ+ communities to sensitive mainstream services in the area
* Promote regional services accredited as LGBTIQ+-inclusive, through website, social media, brochures and other means

ADVOCACY

**Advocate for services and reforms of relevance and benefit to LGBTIQ+ communities**

* Identify issues faced by LGBTIQ+ communities through consultation, and advocate on their behalf
* Advocate for better access to health care for LGBTIQ+ communities