



**LGBTIQA+**  
**Action Plan**  
**2023-26**



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## Community Vision

# Proudly Port Phillip

**A liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community**



## **Inclusive Port Phillip**

A City that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.



## **Liveable Port Phillip**

A City that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces, development and growth are well-managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within.



## **Sustainable Port Phillip**

A City that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.



## **Vibrant Port Phillip**

A City that has a flourishing economy, where our community and local businesses thrive, and we maintain and enhance our reputation as one of Melbourne's cultural and creative hubs.



## **Well-Governed Port Phillip**

A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.

# LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26

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Council's  
commitment

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## Womin djeka

Council 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.

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# Our commitment

## Council celebrates and embraces its diverse LGBTIQ+ communities whose invaluable contributions enrich the social, economic and cultural life of our City.

We acknowledge the very real struggle against disadvantage, inequality and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ+ people. Everyone has the right to be safe, to be themselves and to lead lives free from discrimination. We also acknowledge the significant contribution our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities make to our City's economic, cultural and social capital.

Council's statement of commitment to LGBTIQ+ inclusion is reflected by the vision set out below for 'An inclusive City where diverse LGBTIQ+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated'.

This LGBTIQ+ Action Plan identifies the needs and aspirations for LGBTIQ+ communities in our municipality and is a key part of our commitment to an LGBTIQ+ inclusive Port Phillip.

We will also embed this commitment more broadly in the way we implement our 10-year Council Plan through the delivery of services, partnerships and advocacy.

The City of Port Phillip's new LGBTIQ+ Action Plan is Council's first and builds on Council's strong history of championing and commitment to our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities.

This plan will guide how we embed LGBTIQ+ inclusion into our roles as a service provider, leader, ally, consumer and in our workplace.

The plan was developed in partnership with our LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and sets out how we will work toward creating an inclusive city that is responsive to the diverse needs of LGBTIQ+ people.

This plan will guide how we embed LGBTIQ+ inclusion into our roles as a service provider, leader, ally, consumer and in our workplace.

# Our vision

An inclusive City where diverse LGBTIQ+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated.

The 2023 Midsumma Pride March, which sees thousands of participants proudly marching in solidarity with LGBTIQ+ communities down Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, each year.

# Our principles

Our approach to LGBTIQ+ inclusion and working toward our vision is guided by six principles:

## Human rights and social justice

Upholding the rights of LGBTIQ+ people to health, safety, agency and autonomy. Ensuring equitable systems and policies, and accessible and responsive services and facilities that improve health and wellbeing.

## Cohesive, measurable and accountable

Improving LGBTIQ+ data collection and analysis to inform monitoring, evaluation and reporting against baselines, targets and indicators. Taking a whole of Council approach by embedding LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice as central to everything we do.

## Diversity and intersectionality

Ensuring the diversity of identities, attributes, experiences and abilities are valued and included in the design, implementation and evaluation stages of Council activities.

Ensuring trauma-informed engagement, acknowledging the compounding effect of multiple forms of systemic and institutionalised discrimination and stigma, noting this may occur laterally.

## Nothing for us or about us without us

Advancing the paramount importance of the full and direct participation of those with lived experience, while recognising the value of active allyship. Acknowledging and building on LGBTIQ+ communities' capabilities, supporting leadership and connection, and providing safe spaces to share lived experience.

## Pride and visibility

Celebrating the talent, success, and contribution of LGBTIQ+ people and their families, particularly those from emerging groups. Upholding their freedom of expression by ensuring protection from violence and threats to personal safety.

## Self-determination, connection and pride for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Prioritising self-determination, connection and pride for LGBTIQ+ SisterGirls and BrotherBoys and their communities.

# Developing this plan

## Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee have guided the development of this City of Port Phillip LGBTIQ+ Action Plan.

Established in 2022, the role of Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee is to use their lived experience, expertise, and knowledge of Port Phillip's diverse LGBTIQ+ communities to provide advice on matters that affect LGBTIQ+ residents, businesses and community members who live, work and visit the City.

This includes advice on Council policies, strategies, plans, programs and services and how best to communicate effectively and engage with LGBTIQ+ communities. In addition to providing advice on matters affecting the needs, interests and wellbeing of the LGBTIQ+ communities, the committee provides advice to Council on effective advocacy to other levels of government.

Representation was sought from local community partners, LGBTIQ+ organisations, local businesses, and members of Council's multicultural, youth, older persons and business advisory committees to inform the development of this plan. Council's Employee Pride Network have also played a pivotal role.

### Intersectionality

Council acknowledges there is great diversity within our LGBTIQ+ communities. As well as being diverse in their sexuality, gender identity or sex characteristics, LGBTIQ+ people are diverse in many other ways. This may include their Aboriginality, ethnicity, skin colour, nationality, language, faith, ability, age, location, health or housing status. These diversities can lead to compounding forms of discrimination and stigma and mean their experiences of being LGBTIQ+ can be different. Through the development of this plan, we have sought to hear the lived experiences of people with different identities and enable the voices of people we may not hear from.

The strategies and actions within this action plan will be implemented through an equity and intersectional framework that considers the unique and varied needs of our diverse communities.

### A note about language

Language and terminology have impact and can make the difference as to whether people feel included or excluded. Assumptions and previous experience of how language has been used means terminology can mean different things to different people and groups. We recognise that language has and continues to evolve in meaning.

With the advice of Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, this plan generally uses LGBTIQ+ as an umbrella term that is inclusive of all people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual and plus. The plus (+) acknowledges there are many different terms used in LGBTIQ+ communities to describe identities regarding their sexual orientations and gender identity (for example, gender fluid, pansexual).



# Background

## LGBTIQ+ inclusion in City of Port Phillip

City of Port Phillip has a proud history of supporting and championing the contribution of LGBTIQ+ communities to the social, economic and cultural life of the City and upholding the right to full access to all services in the City.

It has been the home of the annual Midsumma Pride March since it began and staff and councillors have proudly marched each year.

Historically, City of Port Phillip has been home to key LGBTIQ+ establishments such as the Greyhound Hotel and important movements and groups in Australia's LGBTIQ+ history.

Council's aged care services have been Rainbow Tick accredited since 2013, demonstrating our continuing commitment to providing inclusive and affirming services.

More recently, we supported the establishment of the Victorian Pride Centre in Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, the first purpose-built LGBTIQ+ centre in Australia which opened in 2021.

## LGBTIQ+ people and communities in Port Phillip

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. We also welcome one of the largest LGBTIQ+ communities in Victoria, including supporters and allies, who help progress equality and fairness for all.

Precise data relating to the presence of LGBTIQ+ communities in Port Phillip is limited by the information collected through the national Census of Population and Housing undertaken every five years. Advocacy to address these limitations is expected to continue and could see enhanced information available through the 2026 Census.

# 5.1%

of couples residing in Port Phillip are same sex according to the 2021 Census. Making Port Phillip home to one of the highest rates of same sex couples in Victoria.

Note: this is a subset of the total LGBTIQ+ community excluding anyone living in a lone person household, or another family/household relationship. This percentage is the 6th-highest of any LGA in Australia behind Sydney, Yarra, Hepburn, Melbourne and Sydney's Inner West.

## LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing

Research shows that many LGBTIQA+ people experience healthy and connected lives. However, the prevalence of ongoing discrimination and marginalisation contributes 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, drug use and smoking, as well as poorer life satisfaction and general health than the general population (Private Lives 3, 2020, VLGA 2020). Importantly, these issues are not experienced equally.

Whilst there have been significant advances to address equality for LGBTIQA+ people in Australia, participants in a nationwide survey in 2019 suggested rates of violence and harassment remain high. More than one third reported verbal abuse, one quarter reported harassment and one in ten reported sexual assaults in the 12 months prior due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (Private Lives 3, 2020).

There is also growing research that suggests that LGBTIQA+ people are more likely to experience insecure housing than the general population (Private Lives 3, 2020). A survey of LGBTI Victorians in 2019 indicated that one in five respondents reported experiencing insecure housing at one or more times in their life (Private Lives 3: Victorian Sample, 2020), with trans and gender diverse respondents reporting higher rates than other respondents.

Research has also revealed the unique risks and elements of family violence that LGBTIQA+ people experience. This includes bisexual, trans and gender diverse people experiencing family violence at significantly higher rates than the general population (Victorian Government, 2021). Additionally, LGBTIQA+ people may have an increased risk of family violence from other family members (including parents, siblings and children), as a result of societal homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

Unique kinds of family violence that are present within the LGBTIQA+ community include threatening to 'out' a person about their sexuality or gender identity which they may not reveal publicly, threatening to disclose someone's HIV status and young people being kicked out of the family home due to 'coming out' or revealing their sexuality or gender identity (ACON, 2023).

## What we heard from our partners

Through our engagement with partners, we heard that visibility of LGBTIQ+ symbols and staff awareness about how to provide safe and affirmative practice were key to creating a culturally safe environment where LGBTIQ+ people are included and able to participate. We also heard that a focus on continuous improvement and an intersectional approach is important.

Through our engagement with partners and stakeholders, we heard that our visible support for LGBTIQ+ events including Midsumma and hosting the Annual Pride March were influential ways of showing our allyship. Participants also identified the importance of Council having a role in connecting local organisations to facilitate collaboration and collective impact to advance LGBTIQ+ inclusion and participation for the diversity of communities in the municipality.

During the engagement we heard reflections about the positive and negative impacts of the changing landscapes for LGBTIQ+ venues and spaces in Port Phillip over time, and the importance of Council visibly showing leadership and advocating on behalf of and with LGBTIQ+ communities.

Engagement to inform the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan included a series of five stakeholder workshops with:

- external stakeholders drawn from LGBTIQ+ agencies and services operating in Port Phillip
- Council’s Employee Pride Network (internal employee network)
- staff working across services that can progress LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

Priorities that emerged from these engagement workshops included:

- taking an intersectional approach to all LGBTIQ+ measures
- progressing inclusion through consultation and collaboration with subject matter experts and persons with lived experience
- importance of further education, training and capacity building (both staff and our business community)
- advocating at a local, state and federal level for LGBTIQ+ inclusion
- expanding the signalling of resources and allyship, such as signage.

The principles, outcomes, strategies and actions of this plan are reflective of these priorities.

Through our engagement with partners, the visibility of LGBTIQ+ symbols and staff awareness about how to provide safe and affirmative practice were key to creating a culturally safe environment where LGBTIQ+ people are included and able to participate.



City of Port Phillip held its annual pride flag raising ceremony out the front of St Kilda Town Hall in January 2023 to signify its ongoing commitment to LGBTIQ+ inclusivity.

# Strategic context

## Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32

Victoria's first whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy - **Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32** - was published in February 2022. It outlines the vision and plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) communities within all aspects of government work over the next decade.

The Victorian Government released their Rainbow Ready Roadmap in May 2022 which includes specific guidance for local government to help them become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive. This has been used to baseline LGBTIQ+ inclusion at City of Port Phillip.



Port Phillip hosted the Pride at Play exhibition in June 2023, which celebrated LGBTIQ+ games and game developers.

## Council Plan – Inclusive Port Phillip

The Council Plan 2021-31 defines the strategic direction for an Inclusive Port Phillip with the strategic objective for **a city that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.**

Creating an inclusive Port Phillip requires a holistic approach with actions that achieve:

- **An inclusive place** – a city with accessible and inclusive public spaces, transport options, community facilities, shops and housing, that meets the diverse needs of all members of the community.
- **An inclusive community** – which is welcoming, values diversity, and enables everyone to actively participate in their community and feel they belong.
- **An inclusive organisation and workplace** – which is representative of the diversity of the Port Phillip community and ensures inclusion is at the core of its culture and practices. This means council services, programs, places and spaces are inclusive, accessible and equitable, and responsive to the diversity of needs, rights and priorities of our communities. This also means an inclusive place to work where diversity amongst staff is respected and valued.

Whilst this LGBTIQ+ Action Plan is primarily focused on LGBTIQ+ inclusion, we know that inclusion has a much wider reach.

Many of the actions in this plan seek to position Council to think and act more broadly about inclusion for all members of our community and will be implemented in unison with other action plans, policies and programs which include:

- **gender equality** – Gender Equality Action Plan
- **people with disability** – Accessibility Action Plan
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** – Reconciliation Action Plan
- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities** – Welcoming Cities commitment
- age-specific policies.

This plan outlines our specific commitments to LGBTIQ+ inclusion, with strategies and actions that detail how we will work towards our strategic direction for an Inclusive Port Phillip.

Many of the actions in this plan seek to position Council to think and act more broadly about inclusion for all members of our community and will be implemented in unison with other action plans, policies and programs

# Our strategic framework

This plan sets out five focus areas where Council can use its roles as a leader, service provider, consumer, ally and workplace to work collaboratively to realise the vision of an inclusive city where diverse LGBTIQ+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated.

The five outcomes this plan seeks are:

- 1 Inclusive, accessible and affirming services promote LGBTIQ+ people's full and equal participation in community life.
- 2 LGBTIQ+ diversity and participation are enhanced and visible in the City of Port Phillip.
- 3 A safe, equitable and affirming place for LGBTIQ+ people and their families.
- 4 Local businesses and Council procurement activities promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion.
- 5 A proud and welcoming LGBTIQ+ inclusive workplace that is culturally safe, affirming and reflective of Council's diverse communities.

Each focus area focuses on one of Council's roles as a leader, service provider, consumer, ally and workplace to work collaboratively to realise the vision of an inclusive city where diverse LGBTIQ+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated.

Each focus area defines a set of strategies that will help us get to this outcome, and the actions that we will undertake. The principles underpin this work and guide how we approach each action.

# Our plan for action

## Focus area one: Council as a service provider

### Outcome: Inclusive, accessible and affirming services promote LGBTIQ+ people’s full and equal participation in community life.

The table below outlines the strategies and actions that will contribute to achieving this outcome.

Strategy	Action	Who
Improve opportunities for LGBTIQ+ people to connect in culturally safe spaces and events.	1.1 Provide welcoming and inclusive events, activities and festivals in our community, including libraries, that encourage people from diverse backgrounds, identities and ages to connect (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Services (co-lead)</li> <li>• City Growth and Culture (co-lead)</li> </ul>
	1.2 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 (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (co-lead)</li> <li>• City Growth and Culture (co-lead)</li> </ul>
	1.3 Work with young people and community partners, including the Victorian Pride Centre, Joy Media and Minus18 to provide events and programs that support the wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ young people (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families, Youth and Children (lead)</li> </ul>



Strategy	Action	Who
<p>Ensure welcoming and inclusive Council contact points.</p>	<p>1.4 Ensure entry-points to Council services are welcoming and LGBTQIA+ inclusive (ongoing).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All managers</li> <li>Customer Experience Transformation and Community Building and Inclusion (partners)</li> </ul>
	<p>1.5 Use LGBTQIA+ inclusive language and images in all Council communications including our website and publications (ongoing).</p>	<p>Communications and Brand/Digital Communications and Design (lead)</p>
	<p>1.6 Develop and implement gender-affirming practices and guidelines so that trans and gender diverse people are supported when participating in our services (delivery 2023 to 2024).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>Customer Experience and Transformation and People, Culture and Safety (support)</li> </ul>
	<p>1.7 Consider options to provide all gender bathroom and changeroom options in addition to single-sex facilities when planning for the development or renewal of Council facilities (ongoing).</p>	<p>Property and Assets (lead)</p>
<p>Ensure active engagement with LGBTQIA+ communities in Council processes.</p>	<p>1.8 Enable the voice of LGBTQIA+ communities in engagement on planning and reviews of Council services, including through the LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee (ongoing).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All managers (lead)</li> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (support)</li> <li>LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee (partner)</li> </ul>

Strategy	Action	Who
<p>Enhance and promote the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities through appropriate and inclusive Council services and programs.</p>	<p>1.9 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 to 2026).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>• Service managers (support)</li> </ul>
	<p>1.10 Embed assessing risks to the inclusion and safety of our diverse communities, including LGBTIQ+ communities into Council's Risk Management Framework (delivery 2024).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Organisational Performance (lead)</li> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (support)</li> </ul>

## Focus area two: Council as an ally

### Outcome: LGBTIQ+ diversity and participation are enhanced and visible in the City of Port Phillip.

The table below outlines the strategies and actions that will contribute to achieving this outcome.

Strategy	Action	Who
Facilitating networking and education between Council, service providers, business, schools and community organisations.	<p>2.1</p> <p>Work with the Victorian Pride Centre and its resident organisations, other LGBTIQ+ groups and allies to create connections and strengthen partnerships that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase awareness and access to LGBTIQ+ services</li> <li>• create links between relevant Council services and LGBTIQ+ services</li> <li>• advance LGBTIQ+ inclusion in schools and businesses (ongoing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>• Families, Youth and Children (partner)</li> </ul>
	<p>2.2</p> <p>Investigate ways to build our LGBTIQ+ communities' capacity and leadership capabilities, including through connection to relevant programs and opportunities including Council advisory committees and groups (ongoing).</p>	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)
Support LGBTIQ+ spaces, organisations and people to build social connection and participation.	<p>2.3</p> <p>Ensure Council grant programs encourage local initiatives that promote LGBTIQ+ participation and celebrate our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities in line with our planned Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework (2024 and ongoing).</p>	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)
	<p>2.4</p> <p>Identify and advocate with partners to address service gaps for LGBTIQ+ communities (ongoing).</p>	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)

Strategy	Action	Who
Recognise and celebrate Port Phillip's LGBTIQ+ communities.	2.5 Maintain the Rainbow Road Mural adjacent to the Victorian Pride Centre in Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (ongoing).	Maintenance and Operations (lead)
	2.6 Continue Council's participation in and hosting of the annual Midsumma Pride March in the City of Port Phillip, as well as Council's support for Midsumma (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Growth and Culture (lead)</li> <li>• Employee Pride Network (partner)</li> </ul>
	2.7 Promote local LGBTIQ+ history and share LGBTIQ+ stories through our libraries and cultural heritage programs (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Growth and Culture (co-lead)</li> <li>• Community Services (co-lead)</li> </ul>
	2.8 Maintain an annual program of when Council will fly LGBTIQ+ inclusive flags to acknowledge days or events of significance to LGBTIQ+ communities (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>• LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee (partner)</li> <li>• Employee Pride Network (partner)</li> </ul>
	2.9 Ensure new reviews of heritage within the City identify and consider the protection of LGBTIQ+ heritage where appropriate (ongoing).	City Planning and Sustainability (lead)

### Focus area three: Council as a leader

#### Outcome: A safe, equitable and affirming place for LGBTIQ+ people and their families.

The table below outlines the strategies and actions that will contribute to achieving this outcome.

Strategy	Action	Who
Value the lived experience and improve data collection about our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities, to inform Council decision-making about ways to advance equality and inclusion.	3.1 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 (ongoing).	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)
	3.2 Consider the needs of our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities when undertaking Equity Impact Assessments of Council policies and services (ongoing).	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)
Advocate for the rights of LGBTIQ+ people to be safe, to be able to fully participate, and to be free from discrimination and vilification in the City.	3.3 Ensure the update of Council's Community Safety Plan identifies opportunities, including within its Local Laws, to create a safer Port Phillip for LGBTIQ+ communities (delivery 2023 to 2024).	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)
	3.4 Advocate with partners for inclusive health services in the City of Port Phillip that demonstrate commitment to diversity and inclusion, such as the application of Rainbow Tick standards (ongoing).	Community Building and Inclusion (lead)

Strategy	Action	Who
<p>Promote a community that is inclusive and respects LGBTIQ+ people's full and equal participation in community life.</p>	<p>3.5 Actively promote Council's LGBTIQ+ statement of commitment for <b>an inclusive City where diverse LGBTIQ+ communities are safe, connected and celebrated</b>, as part of its wider commitment for an <b>Inclusive Port Phillip</b> (ongoing).</p>	<p>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</p>
	<p>3.6 Publicly respond to incidents of LGBTIQ+ discrimination and where appropriate take preventative steps to enhance safety (ongoing).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive Officer (lead)</li> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (support)</li> </ul>

## Focus area four: Council as a consumer

### Outcome: Local businesses and Council procurement activities promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

The table below outlines the strategies and actions that will contribute to achieving this outcome.

Strategy	Action	Who
Promote social procurement that is inclusive of LGBTIQ+ owned or operated businesses and LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice in suppliers.	4.1 Ensure Council procurement policies and processes enhance participation of LGBTIQ+ owned and/or operated businesses in line with Council's social procurement objectives (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>Procurement, contracts (partner)</li> </ul>
	4.2 Update Council's procurement policies, processes and/or code of conduct to promote LGBTIQ+ inclusive practices in Council suppliers and prohibit discrimination by contractors against LGBTIQ+ service users (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>Finance (partner)</li> </ul>
Increase opportunities and expand markets for LGBTIQ+ inclusive business.	4.3 Create resources to support staff to identify and engage inclusive and diverse businesses in procurement decisions in line with our broader social procurement and business support objectives (delivery 2025).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>Finance (partner)</li> </ul>
	4.4 Promote ways to enhance LGBTIQ+ inclusion across our business community, through Council's Business Network and Trader Associations (ongoing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>City Growth and Culture (partner)</li> </ul>

## Focus area five: 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.**

The table below outlines the strategies and actions that will contribute to achieving this outcome.

Strategy	Action	Who
Provide inclusive people and culture systems and practices that actively seek feedback to inform continuous improvement.	5.1 Continue strengthening our Employee Pride Network and seek a diversity of lived experience to improve workplace policies and practices (ongoing).	Executive Leadership Team member (sponsor)
	5.2 Prioritise the provision of all gender bathroom and change facilities in Council workplaces (ongoing).	Property and Assets (lead)
	5.3 Embed the use of identifying pronouns and work towards Council platforms that make it easier to share pronouns (delivery 2024 to 2025).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People, Culture and Safety (lead)</li> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion</li> <li>• Digital and Technology Services (support)</li> </ul>



Strategy	Action	Who
<p>Enhance knowledge of LGBTIQ+ inclusion and literacy and the needs of our diverse communities for leaders, all staff and targeted service areas.</p>	<p>5.4 Develop management capability for inclusive leadership, including LGBTIQ+ inclusion (ongoing).</p>	<p>People, Culture and Safety (lead)</p>
	<p>5.5 Embed diversity and inclusion awareness training for all staff from induction onwards that includes LGBTIQ+ inclusive language and practice within our existing schedule and in line with our planned Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework (delivery by 2025).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People Culture and Safety (lead)</li> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (partner)</li> </ul>
	<p>5.6 Provide targeted LGBTIQ+ awareness sessions to build understanding of the needs of LGBTIQ+ users in key Council services as part of our planned Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework (delivery 2024-2025).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (lead)</li> <li>• Relevant managers (partner)</li> </ul>
	<p>5.7 Provide options for diversity and inclusion awareness training as part of the four-year learning and development program for incoming Council (delivery 2024).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Organisational Performance (lead)</li> <li>• Community Building and Inclusion (partner)</li> </ul>

Strategy	Action	Who
Provide LGBTQIA+ inclusive recruitment and management practices.	5.8 Ensure recruitment and selection policies, processes and practices promote LGBTQIA+ inclusive recruitment and onboarding (ongoing).	People Culture and Safety (lead)
	5.9 Improve our human resource processes and systems to enable our workforce to confidently share information about their intersecting attributes, to help us better understand our workforce and advance diversity (delivery 2023).	People Culture and Safety (lead)
	5.10 Continue to monitor staff experience of an inclusive organisation that encourages respectful workplace behaviours and takes steps to eliminate discrimination via the annual staff survey (ongoing).	People Culture and Safety (lead)



Image:  
Victorian Pride Centre, St Kilda  
by Brearley Architects & Urbanists,  
and Grant Amon Architects

City of Port Phillip supported the establishment of the Victorian Pride Centre in Fitzroy St, St Kilda. The Centre is the first purpose built LGBTQIA+ centre in Australia which opened in 2021.

# Monitoring our progress

An annual report will be drafted by Council officers and provided to the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee in July each year. The annual report will monitor the progress to date on implementing the strategies and actions under this action plan.

Feedback and consultation from the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee on the plan will be provided. The annual report will be made available to Council for information.

A mid-term report on the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, reviewed by the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee, will be presented to Council in February 2025 and draw on annual report content to date.

Progress will also be monitored through the use of self-assessment tools such as the Rainbow Ready toolkit.



Community members celebrated the 2023 Midsumma Pride March on top of the Victorian Pride Centre.

# Relevant policy, regulations or legislation

## Council policies

### The Council Plan 2021-31

The Council Plan sets out the vision and strategic directions for the City of Port Phillip, and the organisation's priorities for the delivery of these outcomes.

### Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-25

Aims to make sure that Council as a workplace is gender-balanced and diverse, where everyone is valued and respected as a unique individual and has equitable access to opportunities. Also promotes gender equality as a leading organisation and service provider to the wider community, recognising key issues such as discrimination and family violence.

### Accessibility Action Plan

Council's commitment to equitable participation and inclusion of people with disability within the community and the organisation. Sets out a vision for where Port Phillip is a place in which people with disability feel valued and have a positive sense of belonging.

### Reconciliation Action Plan

Explores employment opportunities, builds awareness and understanding, and enhances cultural and economic development for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Port Phillip.

### Welcoming Cities commitment

Commits Council to the Welcoming Cities initiative, a national network of municipalities committed to an Australia where everyone can participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life. Welcoming Cities supports local councils to become more welcoming and inclusive of their diverse communities.

### Positive Ageing Policy

A developing Council policy that will guide future decisions about how we can respond to the needs and aspirations of people aged 60 years and older.

## Victorian Government policies

### **Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022–32**

Victoria's first whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy that provides the vision and plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) communities within all aspects of government work.

### **Rainbow Ready roadmap – local government**

A guide for local governments to become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive and deliver on their commitment to drive LGBTIQ+ inclusion through Victoria's whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy.

## Relevant legislations

### ***Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006***

*Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the charter) is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. The charter requires public authorities, including local government, to act consistently with the human rights in the charter.

### ***Equal Opportunity Act 2010***

*The Equal Opportunity Act 2010* provides protections from discrimination in public life in Victoria. This includes protection from discrimination when based on disability, gender identity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity and ethnic origin), religious belief or activity or sexual orientation.

### ***Disability Discrimination Act 1992***

*The Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their disability.

### ***Gender Equality Act 2020***

Victoria's *Gender Equality Act 2020* places obligations on public sector entities to plan, measure and track progress to improve gender equality. The act requires councils to consider gender equality in the policies, programs and services that significantly impact the public.

### ***Local Government Act 2020***

Provides a framework for the establishment and operation of Victorian councils and sets out that councils have a role to ensure services are available for everyone in their communities as they need them.

# References

**ACON (2023) Domestic and Family Violence**

[t.ly/TX-NF](https://t.ly/TX-NF)

**Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (2020) Private Lives 3: A national survey of the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia**

[t.ly/hN2ni](https://t.ly/hN2ni)

**Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (2021) Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTQ people in Victoria**

[t.ly/tyOCR](https://t.ly/tyOCR)

**Victorian Local Governance Association (2020), Rainbow Resource for Victorian Councils**

[t.ly/rvVPT](https://t.ly/rvVPT)

**Victorian Government (2022), Current outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Victorians**

[t.ly/F8NGI](https://t.ly/F8NGI)

**Victorian Government (2022), Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32**

[vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy](https://vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy)

**Victorian Government (2022), Rainbow Ready roadmap**

[vic.gov.au/local-government](https://vic.gov.au/local-government)

# Appendix one:

## Terminology and definitions

### Affirming or affirmative

In the context of gender identity, this refers to the range of actions and possibilities involved in living, surviving and thriving as individuals being their authentic selves and how they identify. This could include social affirmation (such as changing one's names, pronouns and expression), medical affirmation (for example taking hormones and having gender affirming surgery) and legal affirmation (updating one's legal name and gender in official documents and services). Thus, for example, to be 'affirming' or 'affirmative' as a service provider or workplace is to respect and recognise how people choose to identify.

### All gender

Encompasses a variety of gender identities, rather than the binary notion of being either male or female. For example, bathrooms may be signed as 'all gender' rather than 'unisex', to denote accommodating for multiple gender identities instead of two.

### Ally

A person that aligns with and supports a cause with another individual or group of people. For example, a heterosexual person may be a strong supporter and advocate for LGBTIQ+ rights, thus they would be an ally.

### Discrimination

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, that could be based on grounds such as ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability or immigration status.

### Diverse or diversity

The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds, including those of different genders and sexual orientations.

### Inclusive or inclusion

Refers to the practice or practising of providing equal opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those from a minority group.

### Inequality

An unfair circumstance in society when some people have more opportunities, resources or rights than others.

### Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

### Lived experience

Personal knowledge or experience that is increasingly used and recognised as qualitative data to use in research or the development of policies and programs. This is particularly used in cases where marginalised voices need to be upheld and promoted.

### LGBTIQ+

An evolving acronym standing for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning and Asexual. The 'plus' represents other sexual and gender identities including pansexual and two-spirit.

### Rainbow Tick Framework

An Australian world first quality framework to help health and human services organisations become safe and inclusive for the LGBTIQ community.

### Stigma

A negative view or disapproval of a particular person or group because of certain characteristics that differentiate them from others.



# Appendix two:

## Reflecting on our history

### Pre-colonisation

A full understanding of how the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities included LGBTIQ+ people is limited, however, we know that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures had rich and diverse concepts of gender.

### 1778

British colonisation of Australia brings with it the import of the British legal system, including anti-homosexual laws.

### 1969

Queer activism in Victoria was born in Acland Street, St Kilda, when the daughters of Bilitis (later the Australian Lesbian Movement) was formed.

### 1975

Establishment of Seahorse Victoria, a support organisation for the transgender community, began in a flat in Acland Street, St Kilda. As the group grew, it often met at a café on Fitzroy Street where the Victorian Pride Centre is now located.

### 1980 to 1981

Victoria decriminalises male acts of homosexuality.

### 1982

Australia has its first report case of HIV/AIDS. This epidemic saw gay men disproportionately impacted. Existing discrimination and persecution were exacerbated by community fear and anxiety.

### 1990s

The World Health Organisation declassifies homosexuality as a mental disorder. Being transgender remains a mental disorder.

The St Kilda City Council supported the Positive Living Centre in Acland Street, St Kilda, despite some opposition at the time. This represented an important stand against ignorance and prejudice during some of the darkest days of the AIDS epidemic.

### 1996

Port Phillip City Council establishes its first LGBTIQ Advisory Committee.

Port Phillip City Council adopts its statement of commitment to LGBT communities.

First Pride March along Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, with a gathering of 11,000 people. Fitzroy Street has continued to host the annual Pride March each year as part of the Midsumma Festival.

### 1997

The last state in Australia, Tasmania, decriminalised homosexuality, 22 years after the first state (South Australia) in 1975.

### 2004

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) established to draw the attention of policymakers, opinion leaders, social movements and the media to the violence and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ+ people internationally. The date, 17 May, commemorates the date the World Health Organisation decided to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder in 1990.

### 2005

Victoria abolishes the gay panic defence.

### 2008

The *Relationships Act 2008* provided same-sex couples and heterosexual couples the ability to register their relationship. This provided these couples with the same legal status under Victorian law as being married.

**2013**

Australian Government introduces guidelines on the recognition of sex and gender. People are now able to choose to identify as a gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth or may identify as not exclusively male or female. Gender can be changed in official records.

City of Port Phillip achieved its first Rainbow Tick accreditation for aged care services and has since been maintained.

**2016**

Premier Daniel Andrews of Victoria issues a formal apology for the state's history of anti-gay laws.

Victoria legislates to provide for same-sex adoption.

**2017**

Same-sex marriage is legalised Australia-wide following the Australian Marriage Postal Survey. Although this was seen as a positive step forward for LGBTIQ+ rights, research has since suggested that this as a traumatising time for many LGBTIQ+ communities because of negative media messages and expressions of hatred.

**2019**

The World Health Organisation declassifies being transgender as a mental disorder.

**2021**

City of Port Phillip endorsed steps to enact the Rainbow Local Government Pledge.

Official opening of the Victorian Pride Centre in St Kilda, the first purpose build centre in Australia.

**15 November 2021**

Terms of Reference adopted for the Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee.

**1 December 2021**

Formal appointment of community members and councillors to the Council's first LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee.

# Appendix three:

## Key dates we recognise in our community and workplace

City of Port Phillip recognises the importance of visibly demonstrating our support on days of significance for our diverse LGBTIQ+ communities. Raising flags in civic buildings signals LGBTIQ+ safety and equality and that LGBTIQ+ communities are welcome. This can provide an important sign of hope for many LGBTIQ+ people.

We will seek input from the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and Employee Pride Network to ensure we are inclusive in how we recognise and celebrate the following days:

### January to February

Flag Raising and Midsumma Festival and Pride March

### 31 March

International Trans Day of Visibility

### 26 April

Lesbian Visibility Day

### 17 May

IDAHOBIT – International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexphobia and Transphobia

### 14 July

International Non-Binary People's Day

### 25 August

Wear It Purple Day

### 23 September

Bi Visibility Day

### 26 October

Intersex Awareness Day

### 20 November

Transgender Day of Remembrance

### 1 December

World AIDS Day