



Minutes Banyule LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee

13 April 2023

Meeting details

Date of meeting	Thursday, 13 April 2023
Time	5.30-7.30pm
Venue	Clara Southern Room, Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub
Chair/Facilitator	Cr. Castaldo
Minutes	Sherryn Prinzi

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region’s history.”

Diversity Statement

“Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.”

Attendee

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Cr Peter Castaldo	Committee Chair
Cr Alison Champion	Committee Co-Chair
Michelle McNamara	Transgender Vic; GLBTIQ Multicultural Council
Tommy Christopoulos	Banyule Community Health
Fleassy Malay	Community Member
David Landis-Morse	Community Member
Richard Peterson	Community Member
Paul Byrne-Moroney	Community Member
Ilias Katis	Community Member
Jet Hayes	Community Member
Lara Hunter	Community Member
Cat Hunter	Community Member
Morganne Blackburn	Community Member
Sherryn Prinzi	Banyule City Council (Coordinator, Community Impact)
Xenia Taunt-Rivers	Banyule City Council (Community & Social Planner)
Uncle Charles Pakana	Banyule RAP Committee Member/Chair of Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place

Uncle Owen Butler	Banyule RAP Committee Member/Co-Chair of Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place
Nicole Maslin	Banyule City Council (Acting Director, Community Wellbeing)

Apologies

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Anna Henderson & Yvette Standfield	X2 Marketing, representing Montmorency Traders Association
Kath Brackett	Banyule City Council (Director, Community Wellbeing)
Jo Wilson	Banyule City Council (Manager, Resilient and Connected Communities)
Sage Moorhen	Community Member - Apology
Lucie Kervin	Community Member - Apology
Nathan S	Community Member
Will Delaney	Community Member

Items

1. Introduction

- Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians as read in language by Uncle Charles
- Diversity Statement as read by Cr Castaldo
- Welcome and introductions- all members invited to introduce themselves

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

Agenda Item	Action Arising	Progress
LGBTIQA+ Committee workplan to be reviewed each meeting	See Committee Briefing Paper for update	Ongoing
Memorial to LGBTIQA+ community	Feasibility study underway with interest from Merri-bek, Nillumbik and Hume Councils. See Briefing Paper for further detail.	In progress
Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee Consultation	Opportunity for LGBTIQA+ education linked to IDAHOBIT event. Investigating what the Yarra Regional Plenty Libraries are doing.	In progress
Inclusive Language Guide	Feedback incorporated as provided by Committee Members. Xenia will distribute the updated version once Council Staff feedback has been incorporated as well.	Complete
Trans Day of Visibility	TDOV event held on 31 March 2023	Complete
Viewbank Tennis Club invited to Committee Meeting	Viewbank Tennis Club invited to June 2023 meeting as part of wider discussion of LGBTIQA+ inclusion in sport.	Scheduled for June meeting.

Action 1:

Richard to be contacted regarding engagement in the feasibility study, as happy to contribute.

Action 2:

Sherryn to invite Recreation and Leisure Team to June meeting to discuss ideas of uplifting LGBTIQ+ inclusion in local sporting organisations, with a focus on Child Safety.

3. Standing Agenda Items

3.1 Presentations

- Understanding the Referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament (20 mins)
 - Presentation and facilitated conversation by Uncle Charles & Uncle Owen from the RAP Committee and Barrbunin Beek.

Uncle Charles premised the conversation by seeking correction and forgiveness in the event of incorrect use of LGBTIQ+ inclusive language. Notes the gathering place adheres to the sentiments of the Inclusive Banyule statement, welcomes all people and shares respect for all people in the room.

Uncle Charles noted Council endorsed the Uluru statement from the Heart. The RAP working subgroup are working with Council on their approach to the upcoming referendum. Uncle Charles and Uncle Owen seeks to hear about the experiences of the LGBTIQ+ community through marriage equality plebiscite and invited committee members to share reflections and offer advice to the local First Nations community.

Discussion:

- In reflection of the Same-Sex Marriage Plebiscite, seeing billboards that tell people they shouldn't exist was a challenge and knowing each side of the campaign was funded was difficult to reconcile.
- Be cautious of the mental health ramifications when discussing your issues on a national level, and be sure to look after individual's and your own mental health.
- Consider youth experiences who may not have a recognised voice in the referendum - monitor and respond.
- Visibility is important, as it can become a positive and driving force for change and amplify awareness- get people out and speaking about it as much as possible. At what level? Influence and energy is best focused on big picture.
- Small actions- eg. "Wear your yes" and inviting allies to participate in the small actions but important to let people know what is ok to do to indicate support.
- Be mindful of general safety- Marriage Equality Campaign messaging made people feel unsafe
- It is important to hear as many views as possible about the referendum, not just the dominant opinion, but not at the detriment of any individuals - opinions need to be shared respectfully and recognised as personal or institutional views, and not forced on others in a hurtful or harmful way.
- Devastating experience for trans community- attacks on individuals horrendous. Being called on the validity of your identity is an affront.
- Take extra care of LGBTIQ+ First Nations members of the community, as they have been through this process before and are at risk of retraumatisation.
- Bring community groups together to ensure they are mobilised to support each other.
- Trauma - questioning equality was traumatic, opened-up old wounds
- Reach out for other allies.
- Education campaign- developing understanding of government systems may be helpful- don't trust the skills of the masses to educate themselves.
- Encourage groups to hold conversations, direction is helpful.
- Signage to indicate support.
- Celebrate together on the day of the decision.

The issue of billboards on Council and private land was discussed. A question was raised as to under what conditions can an offensive billboard be removed.

Action 3:

Council to verify the matter of removing billboards on Council and private land, and investigating signage requirements, eg. Permitting.

Action 4:

Sherryn to share Uncle Charles' contact details and committee members are invited to make contact either via email or coming to Barrbunin Beek for a visit.

3.2 Updates from Council

- Census 2026 questions - Council are reviewing what was submitted to the ABS for the last Census and will provide some text on how to submit a quality submission.

Discussion:

Committee reflected on the Census question and noted that the application of LGBTIQ+ inclusive language is limited and data collected by ABS inaccurate and not representative of community, despite the previous submission requests to expand data that was collected. Specifically, it is difficult to identify other than male or female. In the 2021 Census one could identify as male, female or non-binary. Non-binary conflates transgender and non-binary and this question confuses sex with gender.

An opportunity exists to make a further submission by 28th April 2023 to the ABS through the 2023 consultation. It was noted that additional submissions need to contain updated and relevant policy and data.

Specific notes on the intersex community position:

The intersex community has submitted copious contributions to the current census but historically, i.e. the 2021 consultations, we have been completely ignored - we are more hopeful re the next census.

To date, intersex has not been addressed in the census, adequately or at all and in fact the last response from the government re the 2021 consultations was that they "didn't want to burden the Australian populations with too many questions that they would not understand". Now they are saying they can't include questions that the household respondent may not understand the meaning of, and therefore may not answer accurately, so therefore the questions won't be included.

Whilst I agree with the harm of the historical heteronormative dominant culture - I would like to remind everyone that heteronormative is not an antonym for the LGBTIQ+ or even, the LGBTI community, where the discussion is intended to be inclusive of the intersex community.

Specific notes on the transgender position:

Transgender community is growing, with the trans community more confident to come out but need services and services are not coping with demand.

Need to capture accurate data to ensure the provision of appropriate services and supports. Without accurate data systems are inhibited to adapt with increased demand, leaving people vulnerable and unsupported.

It is important to accurately represent all people. Nobody should be left out.

Other viewpoints:

How many times do we have to repeat the submissions before they will be reflected in the Census?

The ABS are still trying to ask the question about man and woman, but just in different ways. Instead, they should focus on changing their lens.

The ABS are advised to move away from heteronormative approach to inclusion approach and focus on addressing systematic approaches, noting this might take time to shift lenses.

Cr Champion questioned whether this is a social issue as opposed to a political issue. With a firm level of disagreement, committee members made these key points:

Societal acceptance has only occurred recently, and this mindset transcends political parties and levels.

There are ingrained elements in all political parties, and this is represented in the lack of representation of transgender persons in political settings.

Notes for submission:

ABS needs to be willing to respond to arguments for inclusion and to make data available to highlight the exponential growth in demand for services by the trans community, and this can be included as part of a new submission.

Ask for an extra question on gender identity and intersex.

Need to present argument in submission and then lobby.

ABS have published the 2020 ABS Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables'. Council can support the adoption of the guidelines. Michelle to provide data on exponential growth in demand to indicate new argument as part of a new submission.

Action 5:

Michelle to provide date on growth in demand for services to support a submission.

Recommendation 1:

Council makes a submission to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by 28th April, 2023 in support of the adoption of the ABS 2020 Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables and use these guidelines to create appropriate questions on variations in sex characteristics, gender identity and intersex.

- Reflections on Trans Day of Visibility and Alphabet Soup Trans Day of Visibility event.

Discussion:

Several members shared positive comments and reflections on the TDOV events, both on 31st March and 1st April. Lara's excellent contributions to organising the Alphabet Soup event were noted and appreciated. Michelle's contribution of musical talents and of lived experience at both events was noted and appreciated. Cr Castaldo made comment on the success of both events, and his appreciation for being invited to participate.

- Update on Committee Feedback on honorariums

Discussion:

Noted that the perspectives of people with lived experience differed on this matter, with some citing a honorarium would support their participation, and others holding the view that, in acknowledgment of their privilege, they are happy to contribute as part of their civic duties.

Committee agreed that offering people with lived experience an opportunity to opt-in to receiving a honorarium would be appropriate, and providing an option to donate their honorarium to a Banyule community organisation would be a reasonable inclusion.

Cr Castaldo asked if a member from the Committee would speak to Council on this issue in June.

Action 6:

Sherryn and Xenia to follow up with Committee Members who may be interesting in speaking at the June Council Meeting.

- Planning for next Joint-Committee Event

Discussion:

Noted that the event will be hosted by the RAP committee at Barrbunin Beek in June 2023, with details to be confirmed closer to the event. All committee members will be welcome to participate.

- Invitation to join the 2023 Banyule Volunteer Celebration

Discussion:

To be hosted on Wednesday 17th May 2023, 5.40pm arrival for a 6.00pm start at The Centre Ivanhoe. The evening will be hosted by radio broadcaster and writer Jacinta Parsons. Please let Sherryn or Xenia know as soon as possible if you would like to attend. Note this is the same day and time as the IDAHOBIT community event.

- Qwere Street event

Discussion:

Committee were provided an update on promotional activities, and offered flyers for distribution, with an electronic version to be distributed with the minutes.

Yvette seeks interest from committee members to act as volunteers at the event, and members are to contact Yvette directly.

Committee members volunteered to act as MC at the event, Tommy confirmed interest, Paul withdrew due to competing opportunity and Fleassy indicated interest. Tommy and Fleassy to contact Yvette directly.

Action 7:

Committee members interested in volunteering or MCing to make direct contact with Yvette from Montmorency Traders Association as soon as practicable. Yvette@x2marketing.com.au or 0408 056 581

Committee to refer to Briefing Paper for reports against Committee Actions

- Easy English guide - language used to describe the LGBTIQA+ acronym – held over due to time constraints
- Update from Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee- held over due to time constraints

3.3 Other business

3.3.1 IDAHOBIT

- Council and Tommy to provide an update on the progress for the IDAHOBIT internal and external events. Note: Progress flag procured to be flown for IDAHOBIT.

Discussion:

Council have planned two IDAHOBIT events, both to be held on 17th May 2023; an internal discussion on LGBTIQA+ inclusion in the workplace; and a performance- based community event at ILCH from 6pm, featuring Fleassy and Amy Francis.

Committee members will be given priority access to tickets one week prior to being release to the public. The event will welcome 80 people only due to the size of the space.

Michelle offered to recite a poem at the event.

Council noted that the progress pride flag, that is inclusive of the intersex symbol, has been purchased and will be flown on IDAHOBIT day.

A committee member noted that the State Government made the decision to fly progress pride flag permanently and suggest that Council should also do this. As an alternative, a member suggested the flag could be flown from IDAHOBIT to the end of Pride month in June at a minimum.

Recommendation 2:

Council flies the Progress Pride flag, that is inclusive of the Intersex symbol, at Council offices located at 1 Flintoff Street Greensborough and the Ivanhoe Town Hall located at 275 Upper Heidelberg Road Ivanhoe every day of the year.

3.3.2 Other updates

- David - Open and affirming cultural safety project at the Anglican Church. It is a two-step process of affirming same sex weddings, coupled with a statement of cultural safety which will be revised every two years. Working on a process to check on cultural safety around Australia, to guarantee cultural safety, and is working with the Rainbow Tick organisation through the process.
- Banyule Community Health Service is working towards rainbow tick accreditation and uplifting cultural safety- strong advocacy with client programs, reaccommodating advocacy to peak bodies to provide more inclusive option. Inclusion and Workplace Well-Being Lead, Jo Southwell, and Tommy are in the process of revisiting each team over the next few months for a reflective, interactive discussion about LGBTIQA+ inclusion at Banyule Community Health, and the practice changes made across teams to provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive service for the LGBTIQA+ community.

- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Foundational Training has been completed by 95% of staff and the Board are underway now. This is key to ensure BCH has strong organisational capability to meet the needs of LGBTIQ+ people, clients, and workforce members.
- Rainbow Shapers and Shakers working group at BCH- to work together to consult and embed change processes, to ensure they are representing the needs of the local community.
- Key – 1st March started “rainbow talks” to provide support conversations about LGBTIQ+ matters and issues in the workplace.
- On Tuesday the 16th May, at 6:15pm, BCH is hosting “of an Age” film screening at Thornbury Picture House, and funds will go towards supporting Alphabet Soup, whom BCH is finalising an auspicing arrangement. Tommy to invite committee to attend and provide further information about tickets.
- Tommy – Whittlesea Pride Festival on Sunday 7th May, run by Whittlesea Community Connections- Tommy to email flyer, to ensure this is circulated out to committee members interested in attending this.
- Fleassy- noted the successful delivery of the International Women’s Day event, and thanked members for attending. The event welcomed a sold-out audience of 250 beautifully diverse people and was a great example of increasing visibility and challenging societal norms.
- Cr Champion is concerned about community members who do not understand what it means to identify with diverse communities. Cr Champion invites committee members, acting as an individual to speak as a guest, at her personal podcast next Friday (21 April) between 1-2 online to acknowledge IDAHOBIT day, noting that it is not a Council podcast. Michelle and Fleassy volunteered to be contacted. Paul makes note of language used by Cr Champion and states that LGBTIQ+ people might also be straight. Paul would consider participating to expand on this matter as an Intersex person at another time.
- Cr Champion received correspondence from residents in her community noting that persons that do not identify as LGBTIQ+ are feeling they are now a minority. Cr Champion asks how we bring community along and educate.
 - Lara suggests raising visibility and awareness through stories and engagement, particularly with sports clubs important- educating and raising visibility need to be shared together.
 - David suggests that people of privilege have the resources to find out for themselves, there is plenty of information out in the community to explain why social change has happened. David notes he is getting tired of being asked- all community members have the responsibility to value all humans; the amount of people who have to lie about who they are is not right. We need to focus on seeking truth and goodness, and allowing people to be who they are, need to focus on inclusivity. David notes everyone has a moral duty.
 - Lara confirms the LGBTIQ+ community has fatigue about having to justify who they are, whole society is set up to tell the straight story and disagrees LGBTIQ+ matters are being forced on others.
 - David concludes that we should not give such views credence.
- Michelle encourages members to attend a new show called Gender Euphoria: Mighty Real at the State Theatre on 19th- 20th May. <https://www.artscentremelbourne.com.au/whats-on/2023/theatre/gender-euphoria-mighty-real>

4. Close and date of next meeting

Next meeting: 15 June 2023, 5.30-7.30pm at Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub.