



# Minutes Banyule LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee 17 February 2022

## Meeting details

<b>Date of meeting</b>	Thursday, 17 February 2022
<b>Time</b>	5.30 – 7.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Teams – virtual meeting
	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
<b>Chair/Facilitator</b>	CLlr Peter Castaldo
<b>Minutes</b>	Sherryn Prinzi/Myfan Jordan - Community Impact Coordinator/Community Planner

## Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Our meeting is being held on the Traditional Land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and, on behalf of Banyule City Council, I wish to acknowledge them as the Traditional Custodians. I would also like to pay my respects to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, past, present and emerging, and to acknowledge other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders joining us today.”

## Inclusive Banyule 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.”

## Attendees

<b>Attendee name - tbc</b>	<b>Affiliation/Organisation</b>
Nevena Spirovski	Co-Convenor Vic Pride Lobby
Michelle McNamara	Transgender Vic; GLBTIQ Multicultural Council
Fleassy Malay	Mother Tongue Poetry, Earth CERC co-op, and Murundaka intentional co-housing
Nicole E-H.	Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee rep
Lara H.	Community member
Nathan S.	Community member
Shev A.	Community member
Morganne B.	Community member
Justin T	Community member
Harper F.	Community member, Pivot Cohousing participant
Richard P.	Community member
David L-M.	Community member
Will D.	Community member
CLlr Alison Champion	Councillor - BCC
Sherryn Prinzi	Coordinator – Community Impact

## Apologies -

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Michelle McNamara	Transgender Vic; GLBTIQ Multicultural Council
Lara H.	Community member
Shev A.	Community member
Justin T	Community member
Richard P.	Community member
Will D.	Community member
Sherryn Prinzi	Coordinator – Community Impact

## Items

### 1. Welcome (5 mins)

Acknowledgement of traditional custodians  
Inclusive Banyule Statement

### 2. Actions Arising (5 mins)

- 2.1:
- 2.3 Contact Officer to follow up with Michelle's Austin contact re attending the committee as guest.  
(Pencilled in for April 2022 meeting)
  - 4.7 Myfan to embed committee members' names and affiliated organisations in agenda template  
(complete)
  - 6.1 BCC to write letter/submission re Religious Discrimination Bill (complete, letter attached previously)
  - 6.2 Census advocacy to be discussed at future meeting, first half of 2022 (noted)

### 3. Round Robin – 2 mins each (max 20 mins)

#### 3.1: Items from committee members:

Vic Pride Lobby are involved in a research project exploring LGBTIQ+ inclusion in the insurance industry. The Inter-insurance lobby want to address embedded discrimination and have developed a survey to understand lived experiences of the industry and from there, to take positive action. Survey will be launched in next few weeks. Contact Nev for further information.

A number of community members raised the religious freedom bill and the various impacts of the public debate, including for people of faith. One mentioned the assumed knowledge of 'rights' as a concern and assumptions that the Bill had the support of all/any people of faith. Also shared experiences of heightened feelings which were then left hanging, as the Bill was parked. This was seen as particularly damaging in the context of younger/school age LGBTIQ+ community.

A number of committee members had also had Covid, or were generally still feeling the effects of the pandemic in other ways, such as risk and isolation.

Mother Tongue and Murandaka have both recently opened up to more on site, person to person interactions. Mother Tongue has developed advice on how to apologise to LGBTIQ+ people in an authentic way. For example, what you might say if you use incorrect pronouns or misgender someone.

Nicole, the Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee representative explained she had to miss the last meeting.

Another community member wanted to share some positive things that had been happening at the same time as more negative things such as Covid and the Religious Discrimination debate. They felt the pending election would offer a good opportunity to drive change.

In the context of the Religious Discrimination and Gender Discrimination Bills, Cr Champion invited further discussion on previous Council submissions regarding both the Religious Discrimination and the Gender Discrimination Bills. Cr Castaldo noted that a number of members of the committee continue to feel challenged by events and discussion around these Bills.

#### **4. Committee community action planning session (85 mins)**

Sherryn introduced the engagement session, which had been designed for the pending LGBTIQ+ Action Plan. Previous committee meetings had raised some areas for discussion, but these had often been cut short due to time. Banyule Council is committed to understanding and improving quality of life and wellbeing for LGBTIQ+ communities and had devised this session to be a deeper discussion around what a good/best life for LGBTIQ+ in Banyule might look like and how Council might drive positive change and build a more inclusive Banyule. Sherryn noted that Myfan had already shared a Northern Councils' Midsumma Engagement survey and asked the committee to complete it and to share through networks.

##### **“What do quality of life and wellbeing mean to you/look like for your community?” (Responses aligned and deidentified)**

- Support and stability;
- Having clear engagement with community; forming connections: who is around and what's out there to support the community?
- Feeling seen/visible. It can be challenging to identify and reach out to the Rainbow community in the local context, so amplifying (local) community voices and promoting visibility (through signage, events, flags etc) is really important. An example of gender neutral toilets was given;
- Need to acknowledge the difference, diversity and uniqueness of the community, both as a whole and the diversity within. Diversity is 'a gift that gives back' to the wider community, 'releasing energy.'
- Social inclusion allows individuals to give back to the community through living a full and authentic life and through sharing their diverse lived experiences.
- Being (able) to be truthful and authentic about who you are, then empowers community members to offer a wealth of openness and creativity. This quality of life that was previously not common to the LGBTIQ+ experience, due to homosexuality being criminalised, for example, and more general experiences of discrimination and 'othering';
- Another community member advocated for a relaxed approach inclusion, in addition to targeted events. This would mean connecting with community is not programmed into particular times but more relaxed. E.g. community spaces that foster day to day interactions;
- Connecting as a parent or member of a 'rainbow family' was also seen as very important, particularly 'natural connection' through honest inclusion and communication - not based on using neurological power to conceal/reveal;
- This would mean acknowledging the intersections of who people really are, and having options to connect with like-minded people. This was not seen as something currently available in local meeting spaces. Wanted to see a place like a café for example, or family events where they wouldn't commonly experience assumptions, stigma etc. A functional space within the Banyule community, with visibility for all. Somewhere LGBTIQ+ could drop in and expect to see 'people like us'.

- Also 'normal' connections for children. Currently, there are no Rainbow Family events outside of digital platforms;
- Also a great need to highlight inclusion of diversity in public functions.

### **'What steps can Council (and partners) take to safeguard and improve quality of life and wellbeing?'**

- Assist us to address the many social challenges *as a community*. This might include peer mentoring, ways utilising (Council/public) spaces to provide support;
- Also we need to know who are the people in your own neighbourhood? Wagga Wagga example of knowledge sharing in the community has worked to increase inclusion;
- Investing in arts and culture (space),-utilising arts as a way of bring out into community, was another way council could help;
- Common spaces for young people to engage in activities;
- Council needs to make sure venues and services doesn't have presumption of gender – eg the name of Maternal Child Health Centres can exclude same sex parents or Transmasculine parents. Also, services need to consider the complexities of intersecting identities and not make assumptions;
- Banyule being seen and visible at community events and other events was seen as important;
- We should learn from other organisations and bring new practice to Council's ways of working to build further inclusion and best practice;
- Council events focused at families and/or children activities, should always specifically including and address gender diversity;
- Work with community to deliver events such as Arts, Culture, Spts, Rec, and services, such as children's services;
- Generally service from Council is good, but keep focusing on continuous improvement;
- Acknowledge it's a two way street. Make community aware of services on offer; their rights and responsibilities. Ask for and exchange service feedback/input;
- Social interactions reboot (post-Covid) possibly with a special event for all community. To remind everyone what is available locally, e.g. community organisations, Banyule Committee stall. Talk about inclusivity actively;
- Welcome to your area? How are we welcoming new people into the community? Particularly LGBTIQ+? Everyone's responsibility to welcome diversity, but perhaps there could be a council route, e.g. Cr Champion sends 'welcome' letters;
- Perhaps special events to welcome gender diverse people, e.g. gender diverse swimming sessions. Explore the options or possibly compile an LGBTIQ+ people directory;
- Council should be promoting inclusive messaging at all times: 'every space for every person'; 'everybody welcome here'.

### **How might we create a place where LGBTIQ+ communities are equal and included, as described in the Inclusive Banyule Statement (above)?**

- Take out the sterility and aim to develop connections and friendships through natural interactions; the foundation of culture and bringing life to it.
- Focus on the commonalities; normalising diversity, embedding and elevating diversity and engagement;
- Service provider versus investment in grassroots culture/community? Can be financial and time savings by empowering community capacity.

**Please complete this QR code survey before the meeting (making your own notes of any gaps/areas you wish to discuss at the meeting)**



See below examples of draft priority areas for the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan. Please contact Myfan with further suggestions/thoughts

<i>Access</i>	<i>Equity</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Rights: my basic human rights are met</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To health services and information that meet LGBTIQ+ needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity in opportunities and outcomes (could include services, information, housing, jobs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the civic, social, economic and cultural life of Banyule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council services and programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. mainstream family violence services may not be inclusive of and knowledgeable in LGBTIQ+; leaving targeted supports with long waitlists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do I have opportunities/am I well represented in civic decision-making, including re Council programs/services etc.?</li> <li>Does the social and cultural life of Banyule reflect and welcome LGBTIQ+ people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe spaces and places</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Banyule services and programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. Parenting services called 'Maternal and Child Health'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do I use Shaping Banyule? (Council's community engagement site)? How est can Council embed LGBTIQ+ in service-design and delivery?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visibility</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does good access look like? Where are the barriers and gaps?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebration</li> </ul>

## 5. Any other business? (5 mins)

**ACTION: Sherryn to distribute Social Infrastructure Framework**

Peter invites contributions to next agenda.

Meeting closed at 6.56pm

## 6. Next meeting: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April, 5.30 – 7pm