

LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

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1. Purpose

Establishment of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee aligns with the Greater Dandenong Council Plan and the objectives of Council's Community Engagement Policy and Framework and contributes to Council's strong commitment to engaging LGBTIQ+ communities in a genuine and meaningful way by bringing together local knowledge, expertise, and stakeholders to support Council's decision-making process.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee are to:

- bring Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and Aromantic perspectives to Council's decision-making process.
- promote and support Council's roles through engagement and advocacy.
- assist Council to identify, articulate and respond appropriately to the needs, challenges, and aspirations of LGBTIQ+ communities. This may include identifying opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships that respond to these needs and aspirations.
- assist in the development and implementation of policies, plans and programs that benefit the community.
- provide input, advice, expertise, lived experience and specialised knowledge to support Council decision making process in timely and effective manner on issues relating to LGBTIQ+ communities.
- give greater prominence and visibility to intersectional LGBTIQ+ community members.
- inform, consult, and collaborate with relevant Advisory Committees on issues affecting and relating to LGBTIQ+ communities.

3. Term of Appointment

The nominal Term of the Advisory Committee is two years and at the conclusion of their term members may re-apply for membership but may only be appointed for 3 consecutive terms before retiring, unless otherwise resolved by Council.

An individual who has held membership for 3 consecutive terms must take a 12 month break before being eligible for re-appointment.

Requirements for re-appointment of Advisory Committee Members will follow the same selection process as set out in this Terms of Reference.

Members terms of appointment are to be endorsed at an Ordinary Meeting of Council.

4. Role of Advisory Committee

The role of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee is to engage with LGBTIQ+ communities and report to Council by providing appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to the Terms of Reference in order to assist in the facilitation of informed and effective decision-making.

All recommendations made by the Advisory Committee require consideration and endorsement at an Ordinary Meeting of Council before being acted on.

5. Councillor Representatives

The nominated Councillor Representative/s to the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will:

- be appointed by Council at the Annual Statutory Meeting of Council.
- actively participate in Advisory Committee Meetings.
- facilitate communication between the Committee and Council.
- act in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct – Councillors.
- champion the rights of LGBTIQ+ communities.

6. Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be an external non-council member elected by the Committee. The term of the Chair is aligned with the term of the Advisory Committee.

The role of the Chairperson is to ensure:

- all meetings are conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.
- liaise with Council's Executive Manager for Strategic Growth & Advocacy and administrative support officer for the purpose of Agenda and Minute preparation.
- obtain consensus from all advisory committee members when developing recommendations to Council.
- foster a positive working relationship amongst all Advisory Committee members.
- ensure all members are given equal opportunity to participate in Committee discussions.
- keep members informed of developments and activities between meetings.
- present recommendations and feedback to Council as required.
- act in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct – Staff.

7. Council Officer Representative

The Role of the Council Officer (s) representative with voting rights is to:

- liaise with the Chairperson and Council's administrative support officer for the purpose of Agenda and Minute preparation.
- foster a positive working relationship amongst Advisory Committee members and Council.
- keep members informed of developments and activities between meetings.
- present recommendations and feedback to Council as required.
- advise the committee on the progress or outcomes of matters before Council.
- actively participate in Advisory Committee Meetings.
- act in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct – Staff.

8. Committee Member Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee members are to:

- prepare for, attend, actively participate and be punctual to meetings.
- provide advice and feedback on issues relevant to their communities.
- contribute expertise, lived experience and knowledge to Council plans, strategies, policies and frameworks.
- identify opportunities for advocacy, projects and partnerships that respond to the needs and aspirations of LGBTIQ+ communities.
- assist in the development and codesign of events, programs, and initiatives for LGBTIQ+ communities.
- annually evaluate the performance and review the Committee's priorities for the following year.

Conflicts of Interest

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest shall be reported to the Chairperson either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest.

A member who has a direct or indirect conflict of interest (i.e. Interest by close association, financial interest, conflicting duty, personal gain or loss) regarding an item to be considered or discussed by the Committee, must leave the meeting and remain absent until the conclusion of the discussion.

The conflict of interest, including the nature of the interest will be recorded in the meeting minutes including the time the member left the meeting and the time they re-joined the meeting.

If a community member nominates for Local State or Federal elections, they must stand down from their position from the time they declare they have nominated until the results of the election are announced. If a member is elected, they will be required to resign from their current position on the Committee.

Media Protocols

All Advisory Committee members must act in accordance with Council's Media Policy and refer all media enquiries to Council's Media and Communication Department for a response.

The Mayor of the day remains the spokesperson for all Council activities, Advisory Committee members are not to represent the Committee or Council to the media or on social media, unless approved by the Manager Media and Communications.

Terms and Conditions

All members of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will be required to accept and sign the agreed Terms and Conditions as part of their membership.

Disclosure of Personal Details

In accordance with Council's Transparency Policy, member's name, qualifications, and current committee position will be listed on Council's website.

Code of conduct

All members of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will be required to abide by Council's Code of Conduct - Staff (which includes volunteers).

Authority Constraints

The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee has no authority to:

- Expend money on behalf of Council.
- Commit Council to any arrangements.
- Consider any matter outside its area of reference.
- Direct Council Officer in the performance of their duties.

9. Membership and appointment of Community Representatives

Membership

Membership of the Advisory Committee is voluntary, and all members must be over 18 years of age.

The Membership will comprise of:

- Up to 2 Councillor Representatives – appointed at Councils Annual Statutory Meeting.
- Up to 2 Council Officers – from the Strategic Growth & Advocacy Department appointed by the Executive Manager Strategic Growth & Advocacy.
- Up to 9 Community Representatives – appointed by resolution of Council.

Appointment of Community Representatives

Community Representatives will be appointed by Resolution of Council following recommendation by a Selection Panel.

Community Members will be representative of Council's diverse and multicultural community including local groups, agencies, businesses, schools, and local residents.

Appointment of Community Organisation/Group Representatives

Where Council seeks membership from a specific community organisation or group, the organisation or group may nominate their preferred representative by providing written advice to Council.

Resignation, Removal and Vacancies

Members of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee may resign from their position on the committee at any time by providing written notice to the Chairperson of their intention to resign.

Council reserves the right to remove members from their Advisory Committee positions when there is a demonstrated failure to meet the obligations outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Vacancies which arise due to resignation or inability to attend the minimum number of meetings shall be advertised through an ongoing Expression of Interest process on Council's website.

A request received by Council for membership in addition to the appointed members will only be considered if a vacancy exists. Received Expression of Interests for membership will be considered according to the selection criteria set out in this Terms of Reference. Provisional endorsement for membership will be considered for approval at the next Committee meeting and formally submitted for endorsement by Council when the meeting minutes are noted at the scheduled public Council meeting.

Vacancies of organisational or group representatives will be filled by direct nomination of the relevant organisation or group.

If a vacancy arises less than six months before the end of the term, the Committee may resolve to leave the vacancy unfilled for the interim.

Induction

New members will be required to undergo an induction process as soon as possible after their appointment to the Committee to ensure they are familiar with relevant Council documents, process and operating requirements, including but not limited to:

- Overview of Council
- Current Council Plan
- Community Plan 2030
- Budget Process
- Reporting Requirements
- Community Engagement Policy and Framework
- Transparency Policy
- Conflicts of Interest
- Privacy and Personal Data Policy
- Victoria Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Media Policy
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy
- Diversity, Access, and Equity Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff
- Governance Rules

Co-opted Members and Non-Member Attendance

The Advisory Group may invite suitably skilled persons (either professional or community based) to join the group in an advisory capacity for a specific purpose and period of time.

Relevant senior officers across Council Departments may be invited to attend the Advisory Committee to provide advice and input as needed to assist the Committee in their deliberations.

Co-opted members, invited community members and invited council officers do not have any voting rights.

10. Selection Criteria for Community Members

Community representatives of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee must be able to demonstrate the following skills, competencies, interests and experience relevant to the purpose of the Advisory Committee:

- Being a member of the LGBTIQ+ community or a committed supporter and ally.
- Interest in local community development, including an understanding of social, wellbeing, cultural, linguistic, environmental and economic influences affecting LGBTIQ+ communities.

- Awareness of the activities, interests, and concerns of LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Broad networks and linkages with LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Ability to cooperate with others and work as a team.
- Capacity to embrace diversity and equal opportunity.
- Willingness to provide advice and guidance to Council regarding trends and opportunities amongst LGBTIQ+ communities in community engagement, community development or programs and services within the municipality.
- Understanding of the priorities as identified in the current Council Plan.
- Ability to prepare for and actively participate in scheduled meetings in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
- Capacity to act in the best interest of the community at all times and look beyond personal concerns and individual interests.
- Capacity to commit to the Advisory Committee for the required duration and attend the majority of scheduled meetings.
- Willingness to celebrate the success and achievements of the Committee.

11. Community Representation Selection Process

Community representatives of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will be achieved by calling for nominations. For the initial intake an advertisement will be placed in the local media, on Council's website and other suitable forums.

Suitably qualified and experienced community representatives may be invited to nominate.

A nomination form must be completed by interested representatives and all nominations must be submitted by the published due date prior to being assessed against the Selection Criteria for Community Members.

Officers may seek further information from nominees or their referees as part of the selection process.

A recommendation regarding preferred nominees for the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will be prepared for consideration and endorsement at an Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Successful Nominees will be formally notified by Council in writing as soon as practical after Council endorsement.

Membership of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee is a voluntary position.

12. Community Member Selection Panel

The selection panel will comprise:

- Executive Manager Strategic Growth & Advocacy or delegate.

- Coordinator Community Advocacy.
- Community Advocacy Officer responsible for administrative support.

Once any nominations have been considered and a recommendation provided, the selection panel will be disbanded.

13. Voting Rights and Decision Making

It is preferable that recommendations of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee are made by consensus however there may be circumstances where a matter is decided by a vote.

Quorum

The quorum for the Advisory Committee must be half plus one, which is the majority of the number of Committee Members with voting rights.

If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the scheduled start of the meeting the meeting may reconvene at a suitable time or proceed but without any votes being conducted.

A quorum must be maintained for voting purposes.

Voting

Each member is entitled to one (1) vote. The Chairperson may exercise a casting vote should this be necessary.

Votes shall be taken by a show of hands and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Councillors, Council Officers, and guest who are not members of the committee are not entitled to vote.

14. Scheduled Meetings and Participation

The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will be scheduled quarterly. Additional meetings may be scheduled as agreed by the Committee.

It is intended that each meeting shall not exceed two (2) hours in duration. If a meeting is to extend beyond this time a vote shall be taken by show of hands to decide if the meeting shall continue or be reconvened at another time.

Under special circumstances a meeting may be cancelled, re-scheduled or extended.

All meetings shall be held at a pre-advised location or in a virtual environment as required.

It is anticipated that members will be required to commit a minimum of two hours per month to the activities of the advisory committee.

It is expected that each member of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee will attend at least three of the four scheduled meetings each year.

15. Administration and Reporting of Minutes and Recommendations to Council

Administration Support and Distribution of Agendas and Minutes

The management of the Advisory Committee will be overseen by the Manager, Strategic Growth & Advocacy.

Administration support will be provided by Council's Advocacy Unit to assist the Advisory Committee to function efficiently and effectively, including but not limited to servicing all scheduled Advisory Committee meetings and the timely preparation and distribution Agendas and Minutes.

All Committee Members are able to submit an Agenda item in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Agenda items must be submitted to Council's (either the Chairperson or Council Officer Representative with Voting Rights) no less than ten (15) days prior to a scheduled meeting.

The Chairperson in consultation with the Council Officer Representative with voting rights will be responsible for coordinating the preparation and distribution of Agendas.

Agendas will be made available to Committee Members no less than five (5) working days prior to a scheduled committee meeting.

Draft minutes will be distributed in a timely manner to all members to ensure accuracy prior to formal endorsement by the Committee at a subsequent meeting.

Minutes will be routinely reported to an Ordinary Meeting of Council for noting.

Attendance and Record of Meetings

All attendance, apologies, conflicts of interests, recommendations and outcomes will be recorded in the Minutes of all meetings held where a quorum is present.

In the event that a member cannot attend, an apology must be received. Future participation of a member may be reviewed for non-attendance of two consecutive meetings without an apology.

Advisory Committee members will be expected to demonstrate their commitment and due diligence by the preparation for, attendance at and active participation in Advisory Committee meetings.

16. Working Groups

Working Groups of the Advisory Committee may be established at the discretion of the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee.

Working Groups may be developed to implement particular actions or roles of the Advisory Committee. The establishment of a working group will be conducted under specific objectives and/or expected outcomes and timelines, which will be determined by the Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee will determine the role, responsibility, and resourcing of working groups. It will retain the ability to conclude a working group or the group's formal relationship with the Advisory Committee at its discretion and/or at the achievement of its objectives.

17. Reporting and Requirements

The minutes of meetings where a quorum is present must be routinely reported to an Ordinary Meeting of Council for noting.

Periodic progress reports on the activities and outcomes of the Advisory Committee will be reported to a Councillor Briefing Meeting or via the Councillor's weekly newsletter (Infosum).

Additional advice and/or recommendations by the committee may also be provided to Council through Infosum or a scheduled Councillor Briefing Session where appropriate.

18. Confidentiality

Information discussed, received, used or created by the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee deemed confidential, must not be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the committee.

Any member who discloses information that they know or should reasonably know to be confidential will be found in breach of the Terms of Reference.

The LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee must act in accordance with Council's Transparency Policy and the Public Transparency Principles as outlined in the Local Government Act 2020.

19. Freedom of Information

All documents produced by or relating to the Advisory Committee that are not publicly available or deemed confidential are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

20. Breaches

The City of Greater Dandenong by resolution of Council may terminate a Committee member's appointment for breaching the Terms of Reference set out in this document and/or Council's Code of Conduct – Staff/Councillor.

All members of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee will be required to accept and sign the Terms and Conditions statement.

21. Evaluation and Review

A review of the Advisory Committee will be undertaken prior to the end of the Committee's two-year term to ensure the purpose, membership and operations of the committee remain effective and in line with Council objectives.

Appropriate changes to the purpose and outcomes of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, as well as amendments to the Terms of Reference, may be made as part of the review process for all Council Advisory Committees.

The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed prior to the appointment of a new committee by the Strategic Growth & Advocacy Department and re-endorsed at an Ordinary Meeting of Council, unless otherwise advised by Council.

Council has the right to conclude the Advisory Committee by resolution of Council at any time if it is found that the Committee is no longer beneficial to the needs of the Community.

22. Contact

(Marek Krol – Community Advocacy Officer)
(Strategic Growth & Advocacy)
City of Greater Dandenong
225 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong
PO Box 200
Dandenong 3175
Tel: 8571 1000
council@cgd.vic.gov.au

Terms and Conditions

I agree to:

- ✓ Attend the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee meetings and provide apologies in advance where attendance is not possible.
- ✓ Act in an advisory capacity by disseminating authorised information within the community and to provide insight and advice to inform Council.
- ✓ Respect the ideas and beliefs of all members and provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to participate.
- ✓ Contribute in a positive way to finding solutions to issues or concerns.
- ✓ At all times act in good faith, with honesty and integrity and apply the skills and expertise I possess with diligence and care.
- ✓ Represent the views of my organisation, interest group or community and not individual views at odds with my organisation, group or community.
- ✓ Notify Council of any potential conflict of interest that may arise with respect to my participation on the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee.
- ✓ Allow my comments from the meetings to be noted in the written and recorded minutes.
- ✓ Allow Council to promote my participation in the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee in order to facilitate community feedback and participation.
- ✓ Not disseminate confidential or personal information that is discussed at the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee meetings as advised by the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee Chair.
- ✓ Act in accordance with Council’s Media Policy and not make any media comment on behalf of Council or the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee unless approved by the Media and Communications Department
- ✓ Adhere to the relevant Council Policies and Guidelines.

Signed: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____