

## 7.2.2 PROGRESS OF RAINBOW TICK AND FUTURE DIRECTION

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### RECOMMENDATION

#### That Council

1. **Notes the progress of initiatives undertaken by the Council relating to the internal Rainbow Tick Plan.**
2. **Updates wording on relevant documentation including the 2021-25 Council Plan from ‘achieve Rainbow Tick certification’ to ‘achieve Rainbow Tick accreditation for priority programs and services’.**
3. **Further explores the Local Government Rainbow Ready Roadmap as an alternative option for Rainbow Tick.**

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide Council with an update on the organisation’s progress towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation and recommendations for how Monash will continue to progress LGBTIQ+ inclusion across the organisation.

### COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

#### **Inclusive Services**

Community development and advocacy to support the Monash community.  
Deliver high performing services.  
Fostering an equitable, just and inclusive Monash.

#### **Good Governance**

Effectively communicate and engage with the community.

### BACKGROUND

Rainbow Tick Accreditation is an evidence-based assessment completed by independent accreditors and is widely recognised as one of the most impactful ways to demonstrate LGBTIQ+ inclusion to consumers. The standards and indicators are part of the Rainbow Tick Framework developed by Rainbow Health Australia. This accreditation can only be achieved, at this time, by health and community services and therefore only a few Council departments are eligible to apply for Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

In late 2022, Council endorsed its first [LGBTIQ+ Action Plan](#) which includes many actions that contribute to Rainbow Tick Accreditation, however there were some gaps as Rainbow Tick is focused heavily on internal actions. In July 2023, officers developed an internal Rainbow Tick Plan (First Phase) with the understanding that it covers additional actions not covered in the LGBTIQ+

Action Plan but are required for a whole-of-organisation approach to Rainbow Tick. Once the majority of the first phase of the Rainbow Tick Plan has been completed, a second phase will be developed to support specific Council departments that are health and community service related, to apply for Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

Council officers have continued to work on initiatives within the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan and the internal Rainbow Tick Plan (First Phase).

## DISCUSSION

### **Alignment between the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan and the Internal Rainbow Tick Plan**

There are 27 explicitly shared actions between the internal Rainbow Tick Plan and Council's LGBTIQ+ Action Plan. These shared actions focus mostly on cultural safety, workforce training, communications, and advocacy for the LGBTIQ+ community. However, a synchronised approach was used when developing the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, meaning that all actions in the plan can be used as evidence during the accreditation process of Rainbow Tick. As such, the effectiveness and longevity of Rainbow Tick accreditation is contingent upon the Council's ability to address priorities identified in the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan.

Officers have commenced work on the actions contained in the internal Rainbow Tick Plan as shown below.

### **Key Achievements Summary**

Some of the key achievements include:

- Developed a Communications Plan and calendar of events for the LGBTIQ+ days of significance in consultation with the Monash LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee. This calendar establishes which days of significance Monash will acknowledge and celebrate and what actions we will take for each of the days.
- Over the past 18 months, Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee was consulted on 17 relevant plans, policies, and programs. This included an opportunity to review the progress of Council's inaugural LGBTIQ+ Action Plan at the close of year one.
- Council's internal LGBTIQ+ Working Group has developed an *LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Practice Handbook* for employees which includes how to create a welcoming space for LGBTIQ+ people and how to ensure privacy and confidentiality when collecting information which is, or has potential to be, sensitive information. This was launched for IDAHOBIT (International Day Against LGBTIQ+ Discrimination) in May 2024.
- Launch of the Monash Ally Program which includes an aspect of increasing employee awareness of cultural safety for LGBTIQ+ employees.
- Gender identity, sexuality and pronouns questions being added to surveys such as the Youth Services indemnity form and the Annual Youth Survey.
- Ongoing opportunities for Council to improve through feedback opportunities (such as surveying our LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee) and obtaining feedback from attendees at community events.

- Employees and community encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate LGBTIQ+ days of significance such as IDAHOBIT (International Day Against LGBTIQ+ Discrimination) and Wear It Purple Day. Officers have seen a great cultural shift across the organisation where:
  - o New staff are opting to wear rainbow pins on their lanyards or adding their gender pronouns to their email signatures as soon as they commence at Monash.
  - o Departments are organising their own events to celebrate LGBTIQ+ inclusion on days of significance.
- Endorsement of a Diversity Statement which includes LGBTIQ+ communities.
- LGBTIQ+ risks identified and added to the Risk Register. Risk assessments are completed for all community events.

In the internal Rainbow Tick Plan, there are 71 actions in total. At the time of collecting data on progress on these actions in January 2024, four actions were completed (6%), 35 actions were in progress (49%), 20 actions were ongoing actions (28%), and 12 actions had not been started (17%).

Whilst significant progress has been made, it is important to consider the following matters towards making this progress achievable and sustainable within existing resources. This includes prioritising client facing services and considering the Victorian Government's [Rainbow Ready Roadmap](#) as a framework for LGBTIQ+ inclusion at Monash.

### **Current Issues**

Rainbow Tick accreditation is an ambitious process and only six local governments in Victoria have achieved partial accreditation to date for one of their services. The services accredited include Aged Care and Youth Services. Benchmarking with other Councils has identified the following considerations:

#### Prioritise accreditation for community-facing services

- Rainbow Tick was originally developed for LGBTIQ+ inclusive service delivery for health and human services organisations. The six standards it incorporates are designed to be used by health and human service organisations, however they can also be applied to specific services or sites within an organisation where applicable.
- To date, no local government organisation has received Rainbow Tick for the whole organisation as this is not possible under the current criteria. This is in large part due to eligibility requirements, as well as resourcing. Only six local governments across Victoria received Rainbow Tick Accreditation for dedicated services such as the City of Stonnington and City of Port Phillip for their Aged Care Services and City of Whittlesea and City of Kingston for Youth Services.
- Limiting the scope for accreditation is necessary because of practical considerations related to the eligibility requirements, workload and process of accreditation which are affected by the number of staff, the number of sites, and the specific areas of the organisation.

Based on considered internal assessment and gap analysis, the following Monash Council services are recommended to prepare for and ideally receive Rainbow Tick Accreditation:

- Youth Services
- Maternal, Family & Child Health Services.

Based on this approach, it is recommended to Council that wording on relevant documentation is updated, including the 2021-25 Council Plan from 'achieve Rainbow Tick certification' to 'achieve Rainbow Tick Accreditation for priority programs and services'.

Once a service or organisation receives Rainbow Tick Accreditation, a mid-cycle review process is conducted at 18 months and every three years full re-accreditation needs to be undertaken. This process will require continuous improvement which will require ongoing effort and resourcing.

#### Utilising Rainbow Ready Roadmap as an alternative to Rainbow Tick

In May 2022, the Victorian State Government released the Rainbow Ready Roadmap, which included specific guidance for local government. It's important to note that this was after the 'Rainbow Tick' resolution in December 2020. The roadmap supports the Victorian Government's *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32* by enabling the creation of safe, strong and sustainable communities.

The Rainbow Ready Roadmap includes a 'Setting guide for local government' which supports users to understand what needs to be done to support LGBTIQ+ inclusion in their unique local government context. The roadmap includes a range of 15 indicators across four key principles of LGBTIQ+ inclusion – understanding, inclusion, visibility, and safety. All of these principles have been addressed in the Monash LGBTIQ+ Action Plan and internal Rainbow Tick Plan.

The Rainbow Ready Roadmap's four core principles of LGBTIQ+ inclusion have been developed to align with Rainbow Tick's accreditation standards, meaning activities undertaken using the roadmap can also be used to support Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

Due to resourcing and eligibility requirements associated with achieving and maintaining Rainbow Tick Accreditation, there has been increasing interest among local governments for alternative solutions including the Rainbow Ready Roadmap.

Where Rainbow Tick accreditation is an inclusion framework developed by Rainbow Health Australia at La Trobe University designed for health and human services, the Rainbow Ready Roadmap framework was developed by the Victorian Government to specifically address local government's needs.

Figure 1 below shows the alignment between the Monash LGBTIQ+ Action Plan, Rainbow Tick and the Rainbow Ready Roadmap.

Figure 1

<b>LGBTIQ+ Action Plan</b>	<b>Rainbow Tick</b>	<b>Rainbow Ready</b>
Priority Area 1: Welcoming and celebrating diversity	 <b>Std. 4</b> Welcoming & Accessible Org	 <b>Principles 1,2,3</b> Visibility, Inclusion and Understanding
Priority Area 2: Enhancing safety, access and participation	 <b>Std. 4 &amp; 6</b> Welcoming & Accessible Org Culturally Safe and Acceptable	 <b>Principle 4</b> Safety
Priority Area 3: Inclusive organisation reflective of its diverse community	 <b>Std. 1, 2 &amp; 5</b> Organisational Capability Workforce Development Disclosure and Documentation	 <b>Principle 1, 2, 3</b> Visibility, Inclusion and Understanding
Priority Area 4: Equitable, inclusive, and accessible services and facilities	 <b>Std. 4 &amp; 6</b> Welcoming & Accessible Org Culturally Safe and Acceptable	 <b>Principles 2 &amp; 4</b> Inclusion, Safety

As the Victorian Government’s Rainbow Ready Roadmap was developed subsequent to Council’s resolution in December 2020, it is recommended that officers further explore the Rainbow Ready Roadmap as an alternative option for Rainbow Tick due to accessibility and consistency with Rainbow Tick. It is also specifically targeted at local government and is therefore more relevant and appropriate in this context.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there is no avenue at this point in time for local government organisations as a whole to receive Rainbow Tick Accreditation, we must continue to progress on the initiatives in the existing plans and consider accreditation for particular departments or sites. It is understood that accreditation can cost between \$15,000 - \$45,000 per service and lasts for three years when a reassessment will be conducted. Costs are variable and depend on several factors, including the number of staff and sites.

If supported, Council officers would explore the Rainbow Ready Roadmap as an alternative for the whole-of-organisation approach and continue with Rainbow Tick Accreditation for selected Council services within existing budget. Officers would ultimately align the existing internal Rainbow Tick Plan to the Rainbow Ready Roadmap to ensure we meet both requirements.

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications to this report.

## CONSULTATION

During the development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan in 2022, an extensive community consultation was undertaken to ensure the Monash community and particularly our LGBTIQ+ members had the opportunity to provide feedback. This community consultation included strategies such as online surveys and workshops. The LGBTIQ+ Action Plan was developed in close collaboration with the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee. This engagement did not gauge specific support for Rainbow Tick Accreditation but did highlight a desire for Council to be more inclusive in its services and programs and to prioritise community-led initiatives.

The internal Rainbow Tick Plan was informed from the community consultation findings and the gap analysis on services conducted with the internal LGBTIQ+ Working Group. The internal Rainbow Tick Plan has been presented to the relevant Council departments for their feedback and input.

The proposals in this report were discussed with and supported by Council's LGBTIQ+ Advisory meeting at its September 2024 meeting and its December 2024 meeting.

## SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By working towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation for priority programs and services and exploring the Rainbow Ready Roadmap for whole-of-organisation, Council will improve its sense of community and services for LGBTIQ+ communities in Monash and surrounding areas. Council will become a more welcoming and inclusive service provider for community members as actions taken will demonstrate that Council values their differences, celebrates them and encourages safety and respect for all. As an employer, Council will become a more desirable workplace as potential employees are increasingly looking for workplaces that visibly demonstrate that they are an inclusive workplace which would allow them to be their authentic selves at work.

## HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

Working towards LGBTIQ+ initiatives is directly seeking to ensure that Council's services are welcoming and inclusive of our LGBTIQ+ communities to ensure they can participate fully in public life with the freedom and respect as the wider Monash community.


## GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was not completed because this agenda item is not a 'policy', 'program' or 'service'.

Note that whilst the update to Council's approach itself is not considered to require a GIA, previous work including the development of the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan did have a GIA completed.

## CONCLUSION

This report seeks to provide Council with an update on the organisation's progress towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation and to clarify key challenges associated with accreditation. A summary of key achievements to date have been included on the internal Rainbow Tick Plan.



It is important for Council to be aware that currently, it is not possible for the whole organisation to receive Rainbow Tick Accreditation and therefore it is firstly recommended that the phrasing of goals needs to be adjusted. The second recommendation is for Council to explore as an alternative for the whole-of-organisation approach, the Victorian Government's Rainbow Ready Roadmap which was created specifically for local governments. Council would continue with Rainbow Tick for selected services and align both requirements.

#### **ATTACHMENT LIST**

Nil