



Terms of Reference

Adopted 17 March 2021

1. Purpose

The aim of the Mount Alexander LGBTIQ+ Steering Group (Steering Group) is to provide Mount Alexander Shire Council (Council) with guidance and information on the issues facing the local lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, asexual and questioning (LGBTIQ+) community and the opportunities to acknowledge and/or address them collaboratively.

The Steering Group will also aim to support Council in its development and implementation of key strategies, services, plans and policies to promote the benefits of diversity and enhance understanding of the barriers to equality being faced by LGBTIQ+ communities.

By achieving these aims Council will demonstrate leadership and best practice by working in partnership with the LGBTIQ+ community.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Steering Group are to:

- a) Build Council's organisational competence in working with LGBTIQ+ communities through a better understanding of issues and facts.
- b) Build Council staff confidence in designing accessible and equitable services and programs that engage LGBTIQ+ communities.
- c) Work in partnership with key stakeholders to acknowledge and address homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and other forms of sex or gender identity based discrimination in the community.
- d) Provide Council and other local community based service providers with an effective channel of communication to reach LGBTIQ+ communities.
- e) Enhance the visibility of safe places and spaces within Mount Alexander Shire to build a sense of connection and belonging.
- f) Advocate for inclusive and equitable communities by celebrating LGBTIQ+ achievements and dates of significance.

3. Membership and Roles

- a) Membership of Steering Group will seek to be reflective of the diverse LGBTIQ+ community.
- b) Membership will aim to comprise of:
 - Up to ten (10) local community members representing the diversity of the Mount Alexander Shire LGBTIQ+ community and allies.
 - Up to five (5) representatives from local community-based organisations that support LGBTIQ+ communities.
 - Up to three (3) Council representatives (including a Councillor)
- c) The Steering Group meetings will be chaired by a Council representative.
- d) Invitations will be extended to representatives of community groups, businesses, organisations and government departments to attend specific meetings, as required.

- e) Administration support (including formal communications from the group) will be provided by Mount Alexander Shire Council.

4. Chair Responsibilities

- a) Facilitating meetings so that all people's opinions are heard and respected
- b) Guiding the meeting in accordance with the agenda
- c) Inviting guests to attend meetings when required
- d) Reviewing draft meeting minutes prior to distribution.

5. Term of Appointment

- a) Membership of the Steering Group will be via a bi-annual call for nominations or if membership drops below eight (8) members.
- b) Members of the Steering Group may be appointed for two (2) years.
- c) Membership will be formally reviewed annually and/or if a member is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without an apology.

6. Meetings and Reporting

- a) Meetings of the Steering Group will be held at a minimum bi-monthly.
- b) Meetings will be held online and/or in a venue located within the shire, determined at the previous meeting.
- c) The agenda and supporting documents will be distributed at least five (5) days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- d) Notes from each meeting will be circulated to all members within the fortnight following each meeting.

7. Quorum

- a) A quorum will constitute the presence of no less than 50% of members.
- b) A quorum will be determined 15mins from starting time of meeting.
- c) If a quorum cannot be reached, the meeting may be adjourned or held however, no formal decisions can be made.

8. Conflict of Interest

- a) Members are required to declare any conflicts of interests with any agenda items at the beginning of the meeting.
- b) The chair will determine what action should be taken if any conflict is declared.

9. Communications

- a) Members agree not to use, apply, disclose, publish or release any information agreed as 'Confidential' without the prior approval of the other signatories.
- b) All media enquiries and distribution of information to the community about the Steering Group, or on behalf of the Steering Group, will be managed by Mount Alexander Shire Council.
- c) Information provided to the media, including newspapers, radio and television will be endorsed wherever possible by the Steering Group and issued by Mount Alexander Shire Council.

10. Review Period for Terms of Reference

- a) The Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Steering Group members at the final meeting of the year each year in conjunction with a review of membership.

Last reviewed 16 November 2022