



Living Proud

LGBTI Community Services of WA
formerly Gay & Lesbian Community Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

Living Proud (Inc.)

ABN 57 648 379 285

Chairperson's Report – Reuben Edmonds

Overview of the board's activities during the 2017/2018 financial year.

After a couple of challenging years, I am proud that Living Proud has returned to a strong financial position despite the loss of contracted funding from the Department of Health. This is due to a very committed staff, including some who had had to leave Living Proud, and passionate board members who have strived to increase transparency and accuracy in all of Living Proud's activities. This places Living Proud in a strong position to take up new opportunities in the coming years.

Board Membership

The board had one new member join during the year.

- Jodie Mercer (February '18)

The board also said farewell to several members who resigned from the board.

- Mikayla-Jay McKinley (August '17)
- Alan Man (April '18)
- Emme Wild (May '18)
- Jodie Mercer (May '18)

All of these members brought differing perspectives and expertise and it was with disappointment that we saw them leave. The departures have left the board with a total of six members and any members interested in joining the board are encouraged to email the chairperson.

In December '17 the annual general meeting was held and elected Mel Praciak as Vice-Chairperson, Sheldon Smith as Treasurer and Mark Hodge as an Ordinary Member.

Living Proud Manager

It was with great joy I wrote about the employment of Ruth Wernham in last year's annual report and it is now with great sadness that I write of her departure. At the end of March 2018 the board decided not to renew Ruth's contract as we were no longer able to ensure we had adequate funding to cover the cost of the position. Ruth's commitment to Living Proud was inspiring and she spent many extra hours responding to emails and looking for further funding opportunities. Living Proud would not be in the stronger financial position it is without the incredible work of Ruth Wernham.

As a result of the departure of the manager the board has taken on several operational duties. In particular the secretary has taken on more work around membership and the annual general meeting preparation, the treasurer has taken on a much more hands on role with the finances of Living Proud and as chairperson I have taken over as line manager of several key staff and ensure contracts and performance reviews are completed.

This increased load on the board and a decrease in numbers has resulted in a high work load which needs to be reviewed. With Living Proud's improving financial situation, new possibilities need to be considered to achieve a more sustainable work load for both staff and the board.

Strategic Review

Work on the strategic plan has been in full swing this financial year with a new plan expected to be drafted in the coming months. The vision, mission and values of the organisation are unlikely to change however several of the strategic goals may be updated or changed all together. Progress on the goals includes:

1. Communicate Our Value: developing our strategic communications management

A strategic communications management plan was developed to enable Living Proud to better identify key stakeholders and how to best communicate to them. This has resulted in better media releases and improvements in how we communicate to our members and community broadly.

2. Confidence, Security, and Growth: transforming our finance strategy, plan and system

A huge amount of work has been put in to improve our financial transparency and record keeping. We have hired a part time bookkeeper and a new external accountant. We also have transitioned to using a new financial management software package (Xero) which has enabled the Treasurer and the rest of the board to better analyse and track our spending and income. Finding new diverse funding sources is an ongoing

3. Develop our Human Resource Capability: developing good processes and tools for all our HR needs.

A grant was obtained from Lotteries West to fund a HR Consultant to develop and renew our HR policies and procedures. This is now complete, and Janet from All People is now continuing as Living Proud's HR consultant. In the absence of a manager she has been invaluable. We now have regular performance appraisals using best practice models and provide professional development funds for each of our staff.

4. Valued Volunteer Community: continuing to demonstrate, maintain and promote the significant benefits and value of being a Living Proud Volunteer

Training of new volunteers has continued including new administration volunteers who are helping in the office with various tasks. Our volunteer coordinator, Sarah Collins, has continued to support the volunteers, provide collaboration and professional development opportunities. A new volunteer handbook was also developed through the HR grant to provide a 'one stop shop' for information about Living Proud that is relevant to volunteers.

5. Proactive Training and Professional Development Services: transforming our professional services to proactively offer a full range of professional development interventions

Training has continued to increase both from grant funding and fee for service training. Currently a lack of staff resources has not allowed for a development of any new training packages however this is a clear priority going forward for Living Proud as training becomes a stronger income source.

6. Create WA LGBTI Community Hub: by leading the way towards the collaborative development of a WA LGBTI Community Hub tender.

This goal was always aspirational and has not been progressed during the last financial year.

Copies of the Strategic plan are available to members and can be provided with the report upon request.

Conclusion

Overall, Living Proud has continued to consolidate and achieve a sustainable financial position. Currently our staff are doing great work on our current projects but have very limited time to be able to explore and seek out new funding sources. With the finances clearer and healthier I look forward to exploring new ways for Living Proud to grow and flourish in its new diverse funding climate.

Operations Report – Reuben Edmonds

Overview of the operational activities of Living Proud during the 2017/2018 financial year.

During this period the operational area of Living Proud focused on delivering a high standard of service provision in the project areas listed below. Beyond the various projects operationally, we also looked to seek out new opportunities particularly in our training. New clients and a range of new grants have led to an increase in the training we deliver.

Staff Changes

Living Proud had several new staff members join during the year.

- Olivia Knowles, Facilitator (July 2017)
- Lorna Graham-Gerahty, Facilitator (June 2018)

Living Proud also said farewell to several members who resigned from the organisation or completed their contracts.

- Ruth Wernham, Manager (March 2018)

Living Proud QLife Counsellor names are withheld to protect confidentiality.

Q Life Project (National LGBTI Health Alliance)

Living Proud has continued to partner with the National LGBTI Health Alliance to deliver the QLife Project (funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing). The QLife Project provides a national telephone counselling and a web chat service for people to discuss sexuality, sexual orientation, gender expression, sexual health and other sex, sexuality and gender diversity issues.

The aims of the QLife service are:

- To reduce the risk of depression, self-harm and suicide amongst people having difficulty with diverse sexuality and gender;
- Enhance the individuals' capacity for mental health and community engagement; and
- Facilitate access to a range of health and community-based services for people of diverse sexuality and gender.

During the period of July 2017 to June 2018, more than 3,000 telephone calls or webchats were answered by Living Proud staff and volunteers. During the same period more than 800 QLife shifts were filled by Living Proud staff and volunteers.

There were 15 volunteer graduates from the QLife training delivered from February to May 2018.

Opening Closets Training (fee for service)

Living Proud provided training to numerous organisations. Opening Closets aims to help organisations tackle homophobia, transphobia and improve their accessibility and services for LGBTI clients. Over the year, 33 Opening Closets half day trainings, one Opening Closets full day training and 9 short presentations were conducted to a range of clients and organisations. While most of the work was in Perth we were also able to provide training in Broome and Albany.

The feedback from the Opening Closets training shows participants value these workshops, with consistently high quantitative scores as well as overwhelming positive qualitative comments.

“The course provided a great atmosphere that made it easy to ask questions, it felt safe to admit you didn't know something, or the appropriate language to use. This made it a far more approachable course and much easier to take things in as there was no worry about saying the wrong thing and causing offence unintentionally.”

ASIST and Opening Closets Training (Mental Health Commission)

Living Proud received project funding for one year (January 2018 to December 2018) from the Western Australian Mental Health Commission to deliver the ‘Opening Closets Mental Health Training’ and ‘ASIST’.

During the first half of 2018, four Opening Closets half-day trainings were conducted with a total of 59 participants, which were delivered to government and non-government mental health, allied community services workers and volunteers. Another six sessions are booked for the remainder of the year.

There were also two ASIST trainings conducted. The ASIST workshops were free of charge and targeted people who identified as LGBTI, peer volunteers of LGBTI community services and people who support LGBTI people and families. Twelve QLife volunteers attended these workshops.

Community consultation workshops for the WA Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI) Health Strategy

The Department of Health announced in Nov 2017 that it would be a process of developing a LGBTI health strategy. As a part of this process a reference group was developed, and Sandra Norman was successful in joining this group as a representative from Living Proud.

A round of grant funding was also released calling for community organisations to conduct community consultation workshops. Living Proud was successful in applying for this funding thanks to the hard work of Dani Wright-Toussaint. On the 9th of June four consultation workshops were held targeting parts of the LGBTI community including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and other diverse gender people as well as specifically invited LGBTI people with disabilities and chronic health issues and peer helpers. In total, 58 people attended the consultations and reports were developed for the Department of Health.

Conclusion

Living Proud continues to deliver a range of projects that focus on improving the wellbeing of LGBTI people and communities. We are also very blessed to have an incredibly dedicated and passionate staff who continue to deliver excellent service to both the LGBTI community and the broader community.

Treasurer's Report prepared for presentation at the Annual General Meeting of
Living Proud Inc.

AGM 16th October 2018

The Board and Members of Living Proud Inc.

Perth, Western Australia

5th December 2017

It should be noted that 2016/7 EOFY statements are available in order to verify information as well as complement this report.

For the year ended 30 June 2017, the following are reported:

- A net loss of \$7,428.86 (from a reported loss of \$45,632 in the previous period)
- Net assets of \$48,044.55 (from \$55,473 in the previous period)
- Cash balances \$47,227.54 (from \$108,673 in the previous period)
- Yielding total equity of \$48,044.55

During the past financial year a great deal of effort and weekly reporting has taken place so as to ensure the continuity of the organisation. Stricter financial controls were implemented in order to control excess spending and a comprehensive monthly review of expenses was undertaken in order to rationalise and streamline the administrative functions of the organisation.

During the course of 2016/7 regular consultations between the Chairperson, Treasurer and Manager were undertaken to maintain control over the financial standing as well as preparation of an accurate budget for the 2017/8 period. Regular meetings were held with our accountants Preston Corporate Accounting in order to make adjustments to existing salary structures and an external HR Provider (All 4 People) was appointed to provide expertise on award rates and industry standards.

Significant control mechanisms have curtailed expenses and I am pleased to report that the loss from the previous period has significantly decreased.

During 2016/7, a comprehensive budget process, which was introduced during financial year, was revised and updated. As a consequence, the Board has been better informed regarding the detail of all income and expenditure and is able to plan more accurately. For the forthcoming financial year, 2017/8, a working Budget has been developed and it is anticipated that it will continue to be a useful management tool for the Board as it can be updated as required until there is a regular pattern of income and expenditure.

Great care and caution have been exercised throughout the 2016/7 period in order to ensure the continuity of the organisation and the processes and structures implemented during the 2016/7 period have enabled sound financial outcomes as anticipated.

Sheldon Smith

LIVING PROUD TREASURER

2016/7 Treasurer's Report AGM 2017