



Living Proud

LGBTI Community Services of WA
formerly Gay & Lesbian Community Services

Annual Report

2019-2020

Chairperson's Report – Lena Van Hale

Overview of the board's activities during the 2019/2020 financial year.

Living Proud had another strong year in the face of adversity, continuing to focus on diversifying sources of funding while providing expert support and education services in the community. The staff continued to support the board by taking initiative to develop new offerings and by managing and overseeing the Living Proud response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The board remained consistent through this year after the recruitment undertaken to expand the board last year. This year was instrumental for building capacity in our new board, and we move into the 2021 financial year with a renewed focus to transition the board into a more strategic committee.

Board Membership

After undergoing expansion and the recruitment of 5 new board members over the last year, the board remained consistent since the last AGM. This year we bid farewell to three board members, including our previous Chairperson Reuben Edmonds and our Vice Chairperson Mel Praciak following the last AGM. More recently, and board member Katie Hodges who spent most of this financial year on the board but recently left the board.

The Living Proud Board for 2019-2020 consisted of:

- Lena Van Hale (Chairperson)
- Sheldon Smith (Treasurer)
- Mark Hodge (Secretary)
- Julia Morgan (Ordinary Member)
- Russell Date (Ordinary Member)
- Jane Pritchard (Member)
- Bev Fabb (Member)
- Sarah Jane Hithersay (Member)
- Kate Darby (Member)

We wish all our exiting board members a fond farewell, and we thank them for their dedicated service to Living Proud and the LGBTI community.

With 5 new board members introduced at the 2019 AGM we took our opportunities to build capacity in our new board members throughout this year. After spending the past year in the Chairperson role, I feel confident that I have come to enjoy and understand the role, and I am extremely grateful to my dedicated team for their support as I have transitioned into the Chairperson role.

In October '19 the annual general meeting was held which elected myself as Chairperson, Russell Date and Julia Morgan as Ordinary Members, and re-elected Sheldon Smith as Treasurer.

Strategic Plan 2019-2021

This year was a challenging year for any organisation in reacting to the global pandemic, an environment which the LGBTI community knows far too well the impact of. The resurgence of a global health crisis in early 2020 did not dent our resolve however, and its times like these that should serve as a reminder of the importance of our work. Despite the challenges relating to the pandemic, we continued to progress our strategic plan faithfully throughout this financial year.

1. Communicate Our Value

This goal has remained very similar as the board is keen to further develop our brand awareness and target key stakeholders particularly as these change with the changing funding climate.

This goal was met this year through gaining and strengthening our alliances with LGBTI organisations, serving as a way to communicate our value to our allies in the sector and continuing to position ourselves as an important fixture of the LGBTI community in Western Australia.

We also undertook a project to communicate our value to the wider community this financial year, entering a short term sponsor partnership with RTR FM's "All things Queer" program. Our board created two radio Ads for the program which are presently played at the beginning and end of the program, as a way to communicate the value of our service to the wider community.

2. Financial Confidence, Security, and Growth

Living Proud's finances remain in a strong position, and our organisation can feel strong in its financial confidence and security going into 2021. The board was forced to spend much of its financial operations dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic throughout this year, leaving us behind where we had hoped to be on our financial projects related to growth. Despite this, we have undertaken multiple projects to assist us in the future growth of the organisation, including the recruitment of Deb Costello, our new project officer tasked with growing the organisation through the administration of aspirational grants and project development.

3. Development of Living Proud Board

This was a new goal aimed at developing the board to be more strategic and to reduce the number of operational tasks that the board undertakes, and it has been well met through multiple offerings this year. In order to address this goal, Living Proud recruited 5 new board members near the end of 2019. We conducted a Board Away Day in early 2020 to brainstorm plans to transition the Living Proud board into a more strategically focused committee, as well as allowing our new board to connect to each other and to build capacity in the entire board.

As an undertaking to reduce the operational tasks required of the board, we also contracted Employure, an external HR package who have been able to assist Living Proud to remain compliant with best practise in the HR space and to relieve the board of some of its operational management of HR matters within the organisation. This has allowed the board to reduce its physical operational responsibilities within the organisation while retaining its oversight and management within Living Proud's HR space.

4. Valued Volunteer Community

This goal includes strategies and activities for developing our volunteers and attracting new ones. We continue to meet this goal through the dedicated work of our staff, and this is demonstrated within Living Proud as we continually show an amazing rate of volunteer retention rivalled by almost no other volunteering organisation.

This was an extremely difficult year for any organisation working with volunteers as the pandemic brought multiple challenges for recruitment, training and retention. For Living Proud, the pandemic emerged partway through our training period for recently recruited volunteers, requiring us to move most volunteers training into next year. Despite the overwhelming adversity in this space, we continue to stay in regular contact with our volunteers including through periodic professional development offerings and have successfully retained a high number of our volunteers even through a long period of being unable to offer them work. This has been a huge achievement, and serves as a testament to the value of our organisation that we have been able to continue to value our community of volunteers even through times as difficult as this one.

5. Proactive Training and Professional Development Services

This goal continues to be met and Living Proud continues to receive demand for training services above what we can fit into a calendar year. We are still working toward multiple options of expanding our training services, including through exploring MOU's with organisations we have worked with in the training space and through the development of further training modules. Despite much of the training for this calendar year being cleared by the pandemic, we come out of it in good shape and remain in high demand for training services.

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

This goal is an aspirational goal of the organisation and the broader community. This year saw some steps taken towards this goal, with Living Proud focusing much energy on building alliances and connections with other LGBTI organisations in WA, including through proactive engagement with the new Rainbow Futures consortium. Although this goal has remained unrealised for some time, I hope that we are approaching a time in our history where this may become a reality for the LGBTI community in WA.

A copy of Strategic Plan is available upon request during the meeting or from the office at any time.

Conclusion

Overall, Living Proud has continued to protect its strong financial position, while identifying areas for growth and development through careful administration of its goals. Living Proud remains grateful to its group of passionate and dedicated professional staff who continue to represent the organisation faithfully in their service to the LGBTI community. After completing my first year as Chairperson, I feel like I have found my feet in an amazing organisation whose integrity and compassion makes me very proud to work for. I believe the 2020-2021 will be an exciting year for organisational growth, and that despite the immense adversity we faced throughout the past financial year we successfully weathered the storm, leaving us in a strong position to grow the organisation in the future.

Operations Report – Lena Van Hale

Overview of the operational activities of Living Proud during the 2019/2020 financial year.

During this period the operational area of Living Proud focused on continuing to deliver a high standard of service provision in each of its project areas, while managing the organisation through the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing its effects on the organisation and wider community.

Staff Changes

Living Proud welcomed Deb Costello into a project officer role to help Living Proud identify and pursue opportunities for organisational growth through grants and other funding opportunities.

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 2019 to June 2020, 860 QLife shifts were filled by Living Proud staff and volunteers.

The senior counsellor organised 10 professional development sessions (with guest speakers) and reflection and development sessions for the volunteers.

Staff attended 13 group supervision sessions.

Supporting Volunteers

ASIST training July 2019

- 13 participants
- QLife volunteers and volunteers from other LGBTI organisations

Effects of COVID19

- Volunteer shifts suspended from March 2020. Our volunteering model requires two volunteers, one in a supervisory role, seated next to each other, which is not possible with social distancing requirements.
- Training of new volunteers suspended from March 2020. Intake planned to resume in 2021
- Increased opportunities for Professional Development (1-2 times per month instead of bimonthly), sessions conducted via Zoom to upskill and maintain volunteers' existing skills.
- Reflection/Development sessions also cancelled but volunteer check ins and debriefing has been provided via Zoom.
- Developed policies and procedures to ensure safe return to QLife volunteering, the first volunteers are due to return in Sept 2020, but only very experienced volunteers who can do solo shifts.
- Currently developing some remote and virtual (online) volunteer opportunities to increase engagement until regular volunteering can resume.
- More volunteers will return in 2021 (subject to change depending on COVID restrictions).

Volunteer Program Management

- Developed policies and procedures to ensure safe return to volunteering.
- Developed Volunteer Recruitment Plan to increase diversity within our volunteer cohort.
- Continued development of Volunteer Program procedures documents.

Opening Closets Training (fee for service)

One standard full day and fourteen standard half day Opening Closets workshops were delivered in this year. A further six tailored trainings were delivered; these ranged from 1 hour presentations to full day interactive workshops. In addition to our work in the metropolitan area we were also able to deliver training in Bunbury, Kununurra and Broome. Each regional workshop corresponded with local Pride festivals which allowed us to engage with those communities and develop more awareness around Living Proud and the QLife service.

At the beginning of 2020 our training requests were increasing rapidly but the covid-19 lockdown resulted in all training being cancelled for the last quarter (April-June).

Despite the challenges of this year our training is still in demand and highly valued by those who attend. We continue to receive extremely positive feedback both from participants in the workshops as well as organisations and other professionals.

Community Events

Aug 2019

- Attended AOD LGBT-inclusive practise networking run by Richmond Wellbeing as wrap up of their WAPHA project
- Presented at Unitingcare West Network Meeting

Sept 2019

- Stall at the 'In Your Head' youth mental health forum
- Facilitated group volunteering event for CWLH tenants in the lead up to Mental Health Week

October 2019

- Final presentation for WAPHA project, to WAPHA staff and other grant recipients
- Attended Ishar seminar 'Let's Talk Culture – LGBTIQ+ in CALD Communities'

November 2019

- Attended Q40 envisioning workshop (Sarah, Sandra & Lena)
- Stall at Pride Fairday
- Attended Pride in Parliament event (Sarah & Sandra)
- Stall at Pride Southwest in Bunbury (Sarah & Sandra) – we were there to present training to community workers and timed it so we could do Pride as well
- Presented 'lunch and learn' for CWLH tenants for Pride month
- Staff and Volunteers marched in Pride Parade

December 2019

- Attended meeting of LGBTI groups, organised by Senator Louise Pratt, meet and greet with Nicky Bath from LGBTI Health Alliance. Nicky then did a site visit at Living Proud

January 2020

- Participated in Pride feedback meeting
- Stall at Roller Derby event, which raised funds for Living Proud
- February 2020 Attended LGBTI Health Strategy Workshop with Nicky Bath from the Alliance (Sarah, Sandra & Lena)

Reference Groups & Consultation

Living Proud is represented on the following ongoing reference groups:

- WA Primary Health Alliance's Metropolitan Community Advisory Council
- LivingWorks Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) – LGBTI adaptations
- Sexual Violence Expert Advisory Group

Living Proud provided input to the following consultations:

- WA Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025
- Police Force Family Violence Investigation Code of Conduct
- WA Ambulance Policy
- Review of the Department of Health's Get The Facts sexual health website
- WA Senate Inquiry into the Magistrates Court's handling of Family and Domestic Violence matters
- Chief Psychiatrist's Guidelines for the Sexual Safety of Consumers of Mental Health services in WA

Living Proud provided LGBTI-inclusion advice to the following groups:

- Perth International Arts Festival
- WA Primary Health Alliance
- 1800 RESPECT (National Sexual Violence and FDV Counselling Service)
- City of Swan
- Lifeline DV Alert project
- Anglicare
- National Disability Insurance Agency

Conclusion

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Living Proud continues to deliver a diverse range of projects that focus on improving the wellbeing of LGBTI people and communities, with a huge increase in representation and consultation work over the last financial year. Our dedicated and passionate staff are a huge credit to the organisation, and have worked tirelessly to allow Living Proud to continue delivering excellent service to both the LGBTI community and the broader community throughout the past year.



Treasurer's Financial Report AGM 2020

Summary and Updates:

The structures and procedures put in place in the last 12 months have created situations of less risk for the Incorporation. Much time and energy has been put into staff salary reconciliation, adjustments as well as analysing leave liability and other factors as well as both simplifying and enhancing the contractual relationship between staff and the Board.

In the time since the Board Away and Planning day held in December 2019, a process of educating the Board as to the financial workings and responsibilities of the Board have started. However, as with most activities and planned actions COVID-19 has slowed our targeted outcomes.

A finance sub-committee has been active in the past 12 months, this team consisting of:

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|---------------|------------------------|
| - Chairperson | Lena Van Hale |
| - Treasurer | Sheldon Smith |
| - Accountant | Catherine Pazvakawamba |

- Bookkeeper Terry Andrews
- Board member Jane Pritchard

This sub-committee has met in various permutations and combinations to discuss, resolve and plan based on needs. As this sub-committee structure has been effective, it is envisaged that it will continue and develop as the needs of the organisation evolve. The structure is also set so as to include succession planning for a future Treasurer for simplified and successful transition after the officer/s have served their elected terms.

LP has agreed to auspice and support an emerging community-based support group by lending both administrative and finance admin support. While the agreement was entered into in the last financial year (2019-2020) there has been no financial activity related to the auspice agreement with Rainbow Futures.

In the absence of an office manager, the bookkeeper has had to take on supplementary administrative roles and on assessment of the role and its capacity the flow of work seems to be manageable and the absence of a dedicated administrative officer has been covered by the bookkeeping and other positions within the staff complement. However, should the admin function and admin or bookkeeping requirements changes suddenly, a revision of the task and a review may need to take place. The absence of a dedicated office manager prompted the LP Board to engage the services of an external consultant, in order to research and prepare additional grant applications. The scope of the work done by the consultant would span the previous and current financial year and early indications are that the

COVID-19 Impacts

As the impact of COVID-19 has had a strong reaction in most parts of the economy, we at LP have managed to continue in spite of the growing move towards recession in contemporary Australia. While we were concerned about financial risk and loss due to COVID-19, we were pleased to see that with additional National Grants and COVID-19 based support packages, our income stream was ultimately enhanced. LP did not in fact qualify for the JobKeeper wage support packages as our income was not adversely impacted. This allowed us to bounce back and take our place in support of others who were more severely impacted by losses of income, family and community support.

Finance Summary

Attached are the Interim Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements. These items are interim and are yet to be audited/verified by our current auditors. As LP is Incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Act (2015) and is classified as a Tier 2 Not-for-Profit organisation, the full audit report will be available to Board Members, LP Membership and the DMIRS [Department of Mines, Industry, Regulation and Safety]. These audited statements and reports will be available on 31st October 2020 for all members to peruse.

- LP has liquid assets of \$307,740 (\$216,907 last year)
- 2020 income is less than last year due to
 - Less grant funding
 - Training revenue impacted by COVID-19
 - Increased costs / redeployment of staff related to COVID-19

In summary, the Board has tasked the Treasury with building a financial buffer to create greater financial sustainability for the continuity of the organisation and the financial support of employees. With additional funding sources and small grants received, we have managed to create a situation where staff salaries and operating expenses could be covered for a 12-month period. Unfortunately, we have not reached our target of 12 months of cover but we are currently tracking at 8 months of reserves should there be a sudden cut in funds received.

All in all the support received from the LP Board and the members of the finance sub-committee have been instrumental in the organisation's ability to stay resilient and robust during challenging times in the economy. In the coming year, we hope to achieve greater financial security, minimise any financial risk and create a sustainable and continuous finance stewardship opportunities. It is fitting to thank the LP Board for their unwavering support of the finance function as well as the incidental, administrative and leadership support that we get from the LP team as well as those in the finance sub-committee who have assisted in elevating the Incorporation to where it is now.

Sheldon

Sheldon Smith

Living Proud Treasurer

30th September 2020

See attached

2018-2019 AGM Report and Audited Statements

2019-2020 P&L

2019-2020 Balance Sheet