

# **Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum**

## **Guidelines as at 22 Nov 2020**

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum promotes the dignity of each person and supports them in their development to be the person God calls them to be.

### **The purpose of the Forum is:**

- listen, learn from and journey with the LGBTIQ people who are members of our parishes and workers within our schools, welfare and other shared services within the Diocese of Maitland Newcastle;
- assist Church members to better understand, include and minister to LGBTIQ people and their families;
- hold workshops and produce resources to assist Church members to better understand, include and minister to LGBTIQ people and their families;
- host social gatherings for peer support of LGBTIQ people, their families, friends, and brothers and sisters in faith;
- provide pastoral support to the LGBTIQ people; their families, friends/support network;
- support LGBTIQ people, their families, friends, and brothers and sisters to grow in faith; and
- arrange liturgies/retreats for LGBTIQ people, their families, friends, and brothers and sisters in faith.

### **Principles guiding the Forum:**

- ☑ The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and the LGBTIQ Catholic Forum have much in common and respect each other's unique identity/role/voice and are committed to working together. The Diocese will be fully informed of and has final say over those resources which it owns e.g., the Forum email address and Forum page on the Diocesan website.
- ☑ The Forum aims to involve as many of its members as possible in decision making.
- ☑ The Forum will try to make decisions by consensus but if this is not possible then decisions are those supported by more than half of Forum members at a meeting
- ☑ The Forum aims to provide as much information about Forum issues as possible to all of its members.
- ☑ The Forum will seek gender and other diversity in appointing people to roles.
- ☑ Coordinator and other roles within the Forum are ministries of service not control.
- ☑ Forum activities will be at times, places and a cost that suits all or as many Forum members as possible.
- ☑ The Forum invites all of its members to contribute their time and skills in whatever way they can.
- ☑ The privacy of Forum members is respected and protected.

### **Structure of the Forum**

Forum membership is open to all people – LGBTIQ people their families, friends/support network and supportive members of the Church. A person becomes a member of the Forum by completing a Membership Form (see attachment one).

A person can end their membership of the Forum at any time either via email or in a Forum meeting.

The Forum would only end a person's membership if their words/behaviour were against the Forum's purpose and principles (see Membership Form).

The Forum holds regular meetings which also involve a meal and socialising. Attendance at these meetings is open to anyone.

These regular meetings are the place where information is shared and where decisions are made.

The Forum will provide a position description for any roles e.g., Coordinators, Email Manager.

Electing Forum members to specific roles takes place at regular meetings.

Any meeting of the Forum can overrule decisions made by a previous meeting of the Forum.

Coordinators will ensure that meetings are advertised to all Forum members and that a record of meetings is sent to all Forum members.

Coordinators will call a meeting of all Forum members if requested by at least three Forum members.

Notice before meetings and a record of the meeting is emailed to Members of the Forum.

The Forum is not incorporated and has no funds. Members are responsible for themselves. Members contribute any activity funds if they have chosen to participate and at the amount they have agreed to contribute.

### Forum decision making matrix

No.	Matter	Coordinator or Email address Manager	All those at any scheduled Forum meeting	All members of the Forum at a specifically called meeting	Each Forum member
1.	New Members of the Forum	<i>No role</i>	<i>No role</i>	<i>No role</i>	<i>Each applicant decides for themself</i>
2.	Remind a Member of Forum purpose and principles	<i>Will do if no one else will</i>	<i>Anyone can – if done with respect</i>	<i>Anyone can – if done with respect</i>	<i>Anyone can – if done with respect</i>
3.	Expel a Member	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
4.	Fee for events and services	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
5.	Electing or removing Coordinators and other roles	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
6.	Determine Forum structure and guidelines	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
7.	Determine Forum priorities	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
8.	Appoint/remove a spokesperson of the Forum	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
9.	Statements on behalf of the Forum to public or to specific people/bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approving the words that will be used</li><li>• Identifying those key people/ positions in which our voice must be heard</li></ul>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>
10.	Accept or alter minutes of meetings	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>	<i>Most likely place for this decision</i>	<i>Can decide</i>	<i>Can ask a meeting to decide</i>

Attachment one

Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum  
Membership Form

All members of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum (Forum) seek to affirm and to build the dignity of each person and to support them in their development to be the person God calls them to be.

There is no fee in joining the Forum.

All members of the Forum agree to support the purpose and principles of the Forum.

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I agree with, and will support, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum by:

- listening to, learning from and journeying with the LGBTIQ people who are members of our parishes and workers within our schools, welfare and other shared services within the Diocese of Maitland Newcastle;
- assisting the Church members to better understand, include and minister to LGBTIQ people and their families;
- supporting LGBTIQ people, their families, friends, and brothers and sisters to grow in faith;
- providing pastoral support to LGBTIQ people; their families, friends/support network;
- including as many Forum members as possible in decision making;
- providing as much information about Forum issues as possible to other Forum members; and
- encouraging Forum members to contribute their time and skills in whatever way they can.

**Name:** .....

**Email address:** .....

**Phone number:** .....

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

Your privacy matters:

- ☒ Your name, email address and phone number will be stored securely by Forum Coordinators.
- ☒ Your email address will be used in the blind copy email field to send you information about Forum issues and events.
- ☒ Forum Coordinators will only call your phone number if they are concerned that Forum emails are not getting to you or if they need to contact you urgently.
- ☒ Your name, email address and phone number will not be disclosed to anyone without your permission.

## Attachment two

### Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum Coordinator position description

#### Purpose of this position

The LGBTIQ Catholic Forum (Forum) will appoint one male and one female Coordinator to assist organise meetings and the healthy functioning of the Forum community. The coordinators will discuss Forum information/issues and will jointly decide on actions required.

The Forum makes decisions at its regular meetings. The Coordinators will take issues to Forum meetings for decision – these are no positions of authority. The Coordinators can only act or speak on behalf of the Forum with prior approval of a Forum meeting.

The purpose of this position is primarily to ensure that the Forum's administrative and practical tasks are completed.

The Forum needs all of its members to care for each other and contribute to the success of the Forum. Coordinators should not take roles away from others and others should not leave roles to the Coordinator when they could complete them.

This is a voluntary position.

The Coordinators, like all other members of the Forum, agree to support the purpose and principles of the Forum.

Key Accountabilities	
Key Area	Key Tasks (what does it look like?)
<b><i>Email notice of meetings</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Forum members receive an email containing a notice of a Forum meeting (where, when and issues for discussion)</li><li>• Forum member email addresses will be in the blind copy email field</li></ul>
<b><i>Ensure meetings are Chaired</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One of the Coordinators will ask Forum members to Chair the meeting or to take notes for a record of the meeting.</li></ul>
<b><i>Email record of meetings</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Record of meetings will include: date, attendance, issues discussed, decisions made, actions agreed actions (who, what, by when)</li><li>• All Forum members receive an email containing a record of Forum meetings</li><li>• Forum member email addresses will be in the blind copy email field</li></ul>
<b><i>Securely store information</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forum member names, email address and phone number will be stored securely (e.g., paper membership forums will be scanned and stored electronically with the paper copy destroyed, electronic records are in a password protected computer)</li><li>• Forum Coordinators will only phone Forum members if they are concerned that Forum emails are not getting through or if they need to contact the member urgently.</li><li>• Forum member names, email addresses and phone numbers will not be disclosed to anyone without the member's permission.</li></ul>