1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Independent Community Advisory Board (CAB) submits its annual report reviewing the 2017 Pride in London (Pride) events. This report reflects issues raised at the CAB private review meeting held on 20 July 2017, which were based on community feedback and matters identified from CAB members’ own experiences. This year, for the first time, the CAB has also sought feedback from a range of major stakeholder organisations within the LGBT+ community. Their comments have been included, but anonymised.

1.2 The CAB is independent from the organisation of Pride. It advises the London LGBT+ Community Pride CIC (LLCP) Board and scrutinises their decisions. It provides guidance on inclusion, governance and other operational issues. Its membership is drawn from different strands of London’s LGBT+ communities with the hope of being broadly representative. The membership of the CAB at the date of this report is:

- Chair: Adrian Hyyrylainen-Trett
- Arts and Literature: Simon Tarrant (Winter Pride)
- Bisexual People's Rep: Edward Lord OBE JP (BiUK) (Deputy Chair)
- Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic People's Rep: Ozzy Amir (QMSU)
- Campaigning and Political Groups: Tom Wilson (LGBT Labour)
- Disabled People's Rep: Vacant
- Faith and Belief Groups: Vacant
- Health Rep: Eleanor Barnwell (Kings College NHS Foundation Trust)
- Local Groups Rep: David Robson (Wandsworth LGBT Forum)
- Older People's Rep: Peter Scott-Presland (Opening Doors London)
- Performers Rep: Vacant
- Professional Groups: Vacant
- Sports Rep: Fabian Valencia (Out for Sport)
- Trans People's Rep: Vacant
- Women’s Rep: Nicki Ryan (Free2B Alliance)
- Young People's Rep: Lukasz Konieczka (Mosaic LGBT Youth Centre)
- Straight Ally: Jacqueline Briggs (Families Together London)
- Open Rep: Vacant
- Secretariat: Mark Delacour (LGBT Consortium)

1.3 This report aims to provide constructively critical feedback to the LLCP Board on the 2017 Pride events and makes recommendations to both the Mayor of London and other public authorities as well as for future Pride organisers.

2. **DIVERSITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY**

2.1 London is one of the most diverse cities in the world. People from hundreds of nationalities, faiths, racial backgrounds, and gender and sexual identities live here. LGBT+ people in London, and those who travel to Pride from across the rest of the UK and the world are drawn from those diverse backgrounds and cultures and it is essential that Pride in London is welcoming and inclusive.
Unfortunately this year, there have been a significant number of issues, which has led the CAB to reach the conclusion that LLCP, the current Pride organisers, have failed to grasp the importance of this diversity, nor of the intersectionalities that many LGBT+ people experience around race, gender, age, disability, and even their sexual orientation and identity. The CAB fundamentally believes diversity is more than a buzzword, and that one of the most important metrics for a successful Pride event is a meaningful reflection of our communities' diversity. This must be done in a systematic and thorough way and not simply tokenistically.

**BAME Communities**

2.2 In our report in 2016, we urged greater collaboration between LLCP and UK Black Pride (UKBP), particularly given the issues which were identified at the time regarding the apparent failures of LLCP in arranging logistics and support for UKBP last year, which ran alongside Pride in the Park, an LLCP event.

2.3 Again this year, feedback around the Pride in the Park event and the lack of interconnectivity with UK Black Pride has been negative. As one correspondent said:

“Pride in the Park seems to be an event of two very separate parts. Once again there was a very white part of the event, organised by Pride in London, which dominates the whole event and which seems to be delivered without reference to, or consideration of, UK Black Pride. For example, why is the Pride in the Park stage not hosted by people from BAME communities? Why is the whole event not more of a positive, active and inclusive partnership? I think it is primarily Pride in London’s responsibility to ensure this happens.

I fail to understand why the marginalisation of UK Black Pride is not a serious concern to anyone who wants to ensure our LGBT communities and events are inclusive to everyone. As I said last year, I think we should all be proud of UK Black Pride and should be doing everything we can to support and celebrate BAME LGBT communities. Not only do I think Pride in London is a long way from achieving this but I think it is currently exacerbating the negative experiences of many BAME LGBT people within our LGBT communities.”

It was also noted that panel discussions taking place during the Pride in the Park event failed to have any BAME representation on them, despite the fact that UKBP was taking place mere metres away.

2.4 Unfortunately, we have seen compelling evidence from a reliable third-party source that the relationship of trust and confidence between LLCP and UKBP has broken down irretrievably. From that evidence, we have concluded that the responsibility for that breakdown lies exclusively with the LLCP Board who have, at every stage, obfuscated and declined to meet with UKBP even through facilitated mediation.

2.5 The CAB remains strongly of the view that full involvement and integration of BAME LGBT+ people into Pride in London is essential to achieve a cohesive and inclusive event, and recommends that the best way to achieve this is to support and resource UK Black Pride, and ensure that BAME LGBT+ people are represented not just at Pride in the Park, but on all stages and in all Pride events.

**Bi people**

2.6 The CAB expresses its strong concerns about the conduct of the LLCP Board regarding their decision to close registrations for Pride Parade entries early this year, one effect of which was that there was no bi group registered to participate in the Parade. Despite a direct appeal by the bi people’s representative on the CAB, the LLCP Board expressly refused to make an exception to allow a ‘late’ registration. It was only when the topic became a cause celebre on social media, that the LLCP Board reached out to the nascent Bi Pride organising committee to ask them to co-ordinate a bi entry in the
Parade, not separately badged as a bi section, but as part of the UKPON (UK Pride Organisers' Network) entry in the Parade.

2.7 Bi people, despite forming the largest component of the LGBT population, remain marginalised within that community and in society at large, and the organised bi community is itself small and is led by very few volunteers. The initial response of the LLCP Board that was okay that there was no specific bi group in the Parade was unacceptable. The CAB therefore recommend that to compensate for this failure and to combat bi erasure more generally, Pride in London should follow the example of Tel Aviv Pride this year, by making bi people the central focus of the Pride Parade in 2018 or 2019, which would require full engagement of bi people and groups in both planning and execution. Going forward, it may be appropriate that each year, one of the more marginalised sections of London's LGBT communities – for example, BAME, bi, trans, and intersex people – should, on rotation, be given pride of the place in the Parade.

2.8 Concerns have also been noted about biphobic remarks made by both a presenter on the Cabaret Stage and one of the Parade podium commentators, and we would recommend that all presenters be reminded of the need to reflect the full diversity of the Pride in London audience, and not to make discriminatory comments, even if with humorous intent.

Young people

2.9 Pride events have often been one of the key occasions for young people exploring their sexual orientation to discover wider LGBT+ communities. Unfortunately, LLCP has been reluctant to engage with specialist organisations working with LGBT+ young people to enable them to fully participate in the range of Pride in London activities.

2.10 For example, whilst the Pride Festival team were helpful in, for example, including the young people's Pride Prom in the Festival programme, other aspects of the Festival seemed inaccessible for young people as there was insufficient guidance on the age appropriateness of events and content. Similarly, once again in 2017, it was not appropriate for young persons under 18 to partake in the Pride's Got Talent competition as most of the auditions took place in pubs and bars. LLCP repeatedly declined the offers of support from LGBT+ youth organisations to make PGT more accessible, leading to direct age discrimination and exclusion of young performers. Also young people were excluded from the (exclusively white) panel Pride’s live Facebook broadcast about young people!

2.11 The Parade does provide an opportunity for young people affiliated with a specific organisation to participate in Pride. Unfortunately, there were reports this year of safeguarding and other concerns regarding Parade stewarding and operations. For example, a lost child was reported to a steward to assist and he was unable to help and did not know what to do. The CAB recommends that, to avoid such problems in future, more training should be offered to stewards to make sure they can be better equipped to safeguard children and young people, as well as other vulnerable people.

Women

2.12 The CAB welcomed LLCP's ambition to make Pride more inclusive of women and, despite our reservations in 2016, acknowledge the success of enhancing the scale and focus of the women's stage which moved from Soho to Leicester Square and had its own headline sponsor. The CAB was made aware however that there was some disquiet at certain aspects of the women's stage programming, for example we understand that Sinitta's performance of some her 1980s chart-topping tracks, with lyrics about the need for big strong men, was not universally welcomed by a mainly female crowd. We therefore recommend that Stage producers review and approve set lists prior to the performance to identify if there are any obvious diversity or other issues with an artist's proposed act.
2.13 The CAB’s attention was also drawn to social media posts by the Chief Executive of Stonewall commenting that Pride’s official media partner gtenmedia was only promoting events relating to men. Ruth Hunt was then attacked on social media, in posts that were ‘liked’ by senior Pride in London volunteers, and her staff were told that she was being ‘unsupportive’. For the most high profile leader of an LGBT+ organisation to be attacked in this way for speaking out for gender parity at Pride is completely unacceptable and the CAB hopes that an apology has been forthcoming.

2.13 The CAB was also concerned that the judging panel for the Parade Awards lacked diversity, in terms of both gender and race, this despite assurances provided to our Deputy Chair (who had been asked to lead the Parade Judges) that the panel would be balanced and diverse. It was only when he threatened to leave the event that an on-the-spot decision was made by Pride’s Stage Producer to co-opt a woman volunteer to join the two white male judges. This was not acceptable and caused considerable embarrassment to CAB’s Deputy Chair, a nationally recognised diversity champion. Similar complaints had been made about lack of diversity on Pride’s Got Talent judging panels. In future, the membership of all such panels must be arranged significantly ahead of time and should be constituted to represent the breadth of diversity of London’s LGBT+ communities.

Faith and Belief Communities – Council of Ex Muslims of Britain

2.14 Following the Pride Parade, the LLCP Board received a complaint from the East London Mosque regarding the placards used in the parade by the Council of Ex Muslims of Britain (CEMB). The LLCP Board responded to the complaint because East London Mosque went to the press, but without first speaking to or hearing from the CEMB. The CEMB then complained that the stance taken by the Pride Board was wrong. The LLCP Board has asked the CAB to investigate the matter as the LLCP Board are not willing to make a judgment on freedom of speech, but the CAB will determine, among other things, if the placards broke the Pride Parade Code of Conduct.

2.15 The CAB recognises the fraught situation many Ex-Muslim LGBT+ and Muslim LGBT+ people face regarding discrimination due to their faith, apostasy and sexuality. These intersections are complex in nature, doubly so given those who identify as Muslim or Ex-Muslim also often identity as BAME. The words used to describe them have tangible impacts across the LGBT+ and wider communities. It is the opinion of the CAB therefore, that the LLCP Board’s public statement and especially its use of the term ‘Islamophobia’, was entirely inappropriate given the complaint was still under investigation and the subject of the complaint had not yet been contacted or given a chance to respond.

2.16 The CAB recognises this issue has led to a number of statements from prominent campaigners, and community groups, many who are allies with close and deep ties to LGBT+ communities. These voices of our community will be recognised and given full consideration when the CAB makes a decision on the matter.

2.17 The CAB will enable and facilitate a discussion and examine this issue with reference to our own Code of Conduct and the context in which it has arisen, including the histories of the parties involved in this issue. We recognise the impact a decision on this issue will have within our community and at large, and will work to come to a decision that best serves the interests of the wider LGBT+ communities.

2.18 The CAB resolves to seek expert advice alongside community feedback (as outlined in 2.16) in order to make a decision on that matter and also decide on the future participation of Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain in Pride. This will be completed before the registration opens for 2018, and as soon as logistically possible.
3. ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

3.1 First, the Independent Community Advisory Board thanks all the volunteers for enabling Pride to take place. Without their hard work, we know that Pride in London wouldn’t be able to happen, so many thanks from the outset. The comments which will follow are intended to be constructive criticism not of any individual or team, but reflect concerns about LLCP’s overall structure and approach. These reflect the many complaints and concerns received over the past month since Pride, and have been triangulated with the experiences of CAB Members themselves.

Pride Parade – delays

3.2 Once again this year, the Parade was affected by serious delay, and the rear of the Parade did not reach the dispersal point until around 6:30 pm. The CAB acknowledges that the initial delay was caused by an unauthorised intervention in front of the head of the Parade by ‘Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants’, and there was a further unauthorised intervention which halted the Parade in front of the police contingent. These interventions were not the fault of LLCP and we commend the stewards and others for the way in which these issues were handled. In future, Pride in London might wish to follow the example of Brighton Pride who proactively engaged with LGSM to permit them a platform at the event without causing any delays.

3.3 Unfortunately, the delay meant that participants were left standing for hours in the form-up area and many left the parade, especially those with children or those that simply got fed up by the length of waiting. It was unfortunate that there was inadequate (if any) communication with participants (including group/float leaders) about the delays. The CAB therefore suggests that the Pride organisers institute a text message system for future years, enabling mass SMS advice to be disseminated to group leaders about any unexpected delays or issues so their group members are aware of the delays and can be prepared. We also recommend that, in the event of delays, the Pride organisers have an emergency supply of bottled water for distribution (this could be acquired on a ‘sale or return’ basis, if not required). We would, as previously, reiterate the need for sufficient toilets and food outlets in the form-up area if there is to be a significant waiting time.

Pride Parade – wristbands and security

3.4 The CAB is aware of the restrictions on numbers in the Parade apparently imposed by the GLA/TfL and Westminster City Council, as well as security concerns raised by the Metropolitan Police Service, which resulted in the need to issue wristbands to all Parade participants. That said, we remain concerned as to whether this is the best way of regulating numbers and indeed whether it is required at all. Moreover, having gone down the route of having a wristband system, we were unclear as to whether it was in fact being enforced.

3.5 On the day we had numerous reports of no security checking bags, and nobody checking compliance with the wristband requirements. This was witnessed by various CAB Members who also saw people joining the Parade (either as part of organised groups or individually) without wristbands.

3.6 The CAB therefore again questions whether there is any need for wristbands or whether it may be possible to once again operate the Parade without the issuing of wristbands, which is in itself a potentially discriminatory process especially for small organisations, informal groups and individuals. who decide late in the day that they would like to take part in the Parade.

3.7 If organisers maintain that it is necessary to retain either or both of the restriction on number of participants and/or the issue of wristbands, then the CAB will be seeking documentary evidence and explanations from the GLA/TfL, Westminster Council, and the Metropolitan Police as to why this is a requirement. In particular, we will wish to establish if the presence of vehicles in the Parade is a
contributing health and safety factor to the need to limit numbers and install barriers, and if so, whether it may be better to remove vehicles and increase the number of people who could take part.

**Pride Parade – composition and authenticity**

3.8 Connected with the issue of wristbands is that of the composition of the Parade, which has caused much discussion, with some stakeholders suggesting that it has become primarily a corporate fun day and marketing exercise, and is now far distant from the political protest and/or celebration about LGBT+ people’s lived experience. The CAB believes that it is essential that Pride remains authentic and connected to LGBT+ communities and that as many LGBT+ people as possible, from an array of different backgrounds, should be able to take part. Whilst we recognise the need for LLCP to generate revenue from sponsorship and corporate participation in order to pay for the event, and also that members of staff LGBT+ networks taking part can add to the diversity of Pride, we remain concerned that the sheer scale of corporate Parade entries can restrict the number and impact of community groups. This is especially so when the total number of participants has been capped and restricted by the issue of wristbands.

3.9 If the total number cap and wristbands do remain in place in future, the CAB would recommend that organisers impose a limit on the maximum number of wristbands any one organisation can have, perhaps at 250. This could be varied for particularly significant national community organisations like Stonewall, who demonstrably have large numbers of supporters, or for a parade entry which brings together a number of different companies within an industry sector such as InterMedia, StandOUT, or Building Equality.

**Pride Parade – on the day organisation**

3.10 Along with the absence of security or wristband checks, it was reported that the Parade sections leads were missing from duty. As one CAB Member reported

“As we got to our section there was no one to contact or speak to, to tell us where we were based. No check in, mobile number of the section manager or any point of communication whatsoever. Security told us to jump in and form a spot, without checking our bags which really questions why we had wristbands in the first place?”

Another account was:

“At about 3.30pm we saw a senior steward and she informed us we were in the wrong part of Section E, we were supposed to be nearer to the front of it, however because the parade was now moving we had to stay near the back of Section E. However, we had asked to see our section manager for up to two hours and nobody had appeared.”

3.11 One of the features that was missing was signposting for all groups in each section. Every year previously there has been a list of groups in each section under the Section Head to enable form-up in the correct order, including inserting latecomers into the right place. This led to considerable confusion and meant that some people could not find the groups they had planned to walk with. It also inconvenienced the Parade Judges who found that many groups and floats were not in the correct order.

**Pride Parade – dispersal**

3.12 Once again, there was a noticeable scramble at the end of the Parade of participants attempting to return to Trafalgar Square. It is fortunate that nobody suffered any serious injuries this year, but that may have been more by luck than judgement. If the current Parade route is used again with the main entertainment space being in Trafalgar Square, the Parade needs to end in a way that people can return down a different signposted street to gain access to the Square.
Pride Parade – stickers

3.13 The policy on distribution of stickers by Parade groups needs to be clear and avoid confusion. We understand that the budgeted clean-up costs are predicated on groups not giving out stickers, and that additional costs are incurred to remove stickers from street furniture, road/pavement surfaces etc and that such additional costs need to be met somehow. The CAB therefore suggests that any group or organisation which has breached the Parade prohibition on stickers should either be surcharged for additional clean-up costs, or should be charged an increased entry fee for the following year. This would have the benefit of not penalising those groups who do not misbehave. Whatever the future policy on stickers right from registration, it needs to be clear so groups in the future do not spend resources purchasing stickers and later find themselves unable to use them.

4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Much has been written about the #LoveHappensHere marketing campaign and in particular the poster campaign which accompanied it. The content was normative, cis, and white and erasing of BAME people, bi people, and trans people for whom there was no visibility. Similarly, there was no visibility for young people or older people. LLCP’s initial reaction, that no bi, trans, or BAME content had been submitted was laughable and offensive. It is the Pride organisers’ responsibility for ensuring that the events and their marketing material are fully reflective of London’s diverse communities. Ways this might have been made better were by using names that clearly were, for example, of people from a south Asian background, and by including the simple age and gender pronoun in brackets after the name.

4.2 The fact that some of the posters had to be withdrawn with an apology from LLCP is a damning indictment of the marketing campaign and the lack of oversight and insight by the Marketing Director and her team. Whilst the CAB was consulted about the concept for the campaign, it was not shown the content until it had gone live, by which stage it was too late to input on what had become obvious, that it had failed to address a sizeable proportion of the Pride audience. Instead, the campaign seemed targeted at a straight audience with slogans such as “My gay friends make me more attractive by association”. Some of the content also contained highly inappropriate language: “being homophobic is sooo gay”.

4.3 It is unfortunate that the failure with the poster campaign overshadowed the positive and diverse messages on the television ‘Apology’ campaign which was run in conjunction with Channel 4, and which was moving and reflective of the different strands of LGBT+ lived experience.

4.4 The CAB recommends that, in future, Pride marketing campaigns should reflect the broadest extent of LGBT+ people’s lived experiences and not solely focus on the normative lifestyles of some. It is essential that such campaigns include people from all sections of London’s LGBT+ communities, and be reflective of their intersections with race, disability, gender, age or religion. In future, we would invite Pride organisers to consult about the full design concepts of their marketing campaign with the CAB, but also to ask us to sense check the final designs, prior to release.

5. FUTURE OF PRIDE IN LONDON

Contractual arrangements

5.1 2017 marks the end of the Mayor of London’s current five-year grant agreement with LLCP to organise the Pride in London events and we are sure that the Officers of the Greater London Authority will be considering arrangements for Pride in future years to make recommendations to the Mayor.
5.2 Ahead of the Mayor making any decisions as to the future of Pride in London, we would strongly urge that consultation with the Capital’s LGBT+ communities take place. As Pride’s existing Independent Community Advisory Board, with deep roots into our communities, we would be happy to facilitate such consultation alongside your Officers.

5.3 In considering how Pride in London should be organised in future, and in light of some of the challenges faced by the current and former Pride organisers, the CAB recommends that the Mayor should become the proprietor of the registered trademarks and other intellectual property rights to London LGBT+ Pride and licence, after a competitive tender process, the organisation of the Pride events on a five-year contract, to which should be attached a range of key performance indicators, including on diversity and inclusion. An alternative model might be vesting Pride’s IP rights and the commissioning function in an independent charity or indeed with the CAB itself, but that wouldn’t necessarily have the public and legal accountability of having the Mayor as the licensing authority.

5.4 The Pride licensee would then be monitored by the Greater London Authority and by the Independent Community Advisory Board on behalf of London’s LGBT+ communities against those key performance indicators, and held accountable for the running of the event and use of public funds.

Content and structure

5.5 London’s Pride Parade is one of the largest in the world - the current footprint is at capacity and will soon become unviable. If Sao Paolo (3 million) and Madrid (2.3 million) are anything to go by, London’s Pride could potentially double in size over the coming decade.

5.6 As the CAB has recommended for the last two years, we continue to believe that the best solution to the current overcrowding is for the Parade to begin on the Embankment, travelling via Parliament Square, Whitehall, Trafalgar Square, and ending in Hyde Park, representing a unique opportunity to launch an international Pride Festival Day in the heart of London. The arts are sorely lacking from the current Pride day format and a Pride Festival Day in Hyde Park would enable Pride to showcase London’s LGBT+ artistic and creative talent, whilst celebrating equality and diversity.

5.7 Other parks and commons have also been suggested, but the symbolism of Hyde Park’s LGBT+ history, its location in the capital’s epicentre within a natural walking distance from the parade itself, and its capacity to absorb growing numbers, makes for a compelling argument that it should be considered for 2018 and beyond. The CAB therefore recommends that the Mayor negotiate with the Royal Parks and their entertainment licensee, AEG, to permit Pride to use Hyde Park, including AEG’s festival facilities, for the Pride Festival Day in future years.

Environmental Impact

5.8 Inevitably major events like Pride have an impact on the environment and the CAB considers that it would be responsible behaviour for the organisers to produce an annual environmental impact policy and assessment in future. Particular concerns have been expressed by some of the LGBT+ youth organisations that there are no on-street recycling facilities and often the materials used for banners, and signage are completely unrecyclable as well as undegradable.

Reliance on unpaid labour

5.9 Whilst we have not yet seen the statistics for Pride’s volunteers this year, it is fair to say that reliance on unpaid volunteers can often skew the make-up of those who are able to contribute their time, particularly at the most senior levels. If Pride’s workforce is going to be representative of London’s diversity and not mainly middle-class, white, and cisgendered then this should be reviewed.
Relationship between Pride organisers and the CAB

5.10 The Community Advisory Board is made up of volunteers, most of whom have considerable experience as leaders in various aspects of LGBT+ communities and, in some cases highly responsible day jobs or wider leadership roles. The CAB members give up many hours of their time throughout the year because we believe passionately in the importance of Pride and through a desire for the events to be successful. It has become increasingly clear that this experience and commitment is not appreciated by some members of the LLCP Board and that our independent expert opinion is often dismissed or ignored.

5.11 Whatever the future organisation of Pride in London, we strongly believe that effective and involved consultation with LGBT+ communities is essential to ensure that Pride is reflective of London’s diversity. We believe that the CAB can continue to offer Pride organisers a helpful forum to advise and scrutinise their work and we offer our services on that basis. In return, we hope that Pride organisers will take the CAB seriously and fully engage with it and recognise our work collectively and individually, including at Pride events.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This has not been an easy report to write. The CAB wants Pride to succeed, and we pay tribute to the LLCP Board for the growth of the event over the last five years and for the positive profile that it has generated for LGBT+ people in London and beyond. We regret however that this has been at the cost of the more marginalised members of our communities, those who are already so often erased or ignored. We fundamentally believe that Pride needs to be for all LGBT+ people, including those who find the labels themselves to be off-putting, who identify as queer and/or genderqueer, who find the presence of the police or big companies uncomfortable. They form part of our communities as well and Pride in London needs to find a way of making them feel welcome. If we achieve that, then we can say truthfully that love, in all of its forms, really does happen here.

6.2 Finally, we would wish to record our thanks to Patrick Lyster-Todd, the Director of Community Engagement for LLCP, who stands down from the Board this year. Patrick has been a fantastic supporter of the CAB throughout his tenure and demonstrates a real commitment to ensuring that Pride is fully reflective of the diverse communities that it brings together. We will miss him enormously.

ADRIAN HYYRYLAINEN-TRETT       EDWARD LORD, OBE JP
Chair                           Deputy Chair

16 August 2017