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EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

held on 18 March 2021 at 10:00am, online – Microsoft Teams

Present:

C Reich, City of Melton
D Clarke, Community Member
V Sharma, Community Member
A Brand, Community Member
M Costa, Melton West Primary School
S O'Kelly, BPA Children's Services
D Wright, Victorian Inclusion Agency
S Mudie, TRY Australia
M Boyd, Brotherhood of St Laurence
C Owens, Djerriwarrh Health Services
J Gemoh, Salvation Army
B Ball, City of Melton
B Nguyen, Department of Education and Training (Proxy, D Wilson)
J Taylor, Department of Education and Training
A Holmes, Tweddle Child & Family Health Service
E Sutherland, Melton Primary School
S Bowen, City of Melton
C De Bono, City of Melton
M Lobe, City of Melton
K Curson, City of Melton
L Xerri, City of Melton – (minute taker)

Chairperson: S O'Kelly, BPA Children's Services

1. Welcome

S O'Kelly welcomed all attendees and acknowledged the meeting taking place in the land of Kulin Nation and paid respect to Kulin Nation people and their Elders both past and present and extended this respect to any Aboriginal people at the meeting.

2. Apologies

Cr Vandenberg, Councillor
H Schiele, Independent Schools Victoria
S Prestney, City of Melton
J Weber, Caroline Chisholm Society
D Wilson, Department of Education and Training
G Callander, Djerriwarrh Health Services

3. Declaration of interests and/or conflict of interests

Nil.

4. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**Motion**

C Reich / A Holmes

That the minutes of the Early Years Partnership Committee Meeting held on 21 January 2021 were adopted by Council at the ordinary meeting held on 15 March 2021.

Business Arising

K Curson updated the committee on nominations received. Individuals who have submitted nominations have been contacted to advise them of the outcomes.

The successful nominations were;

Community	Feb 2024	Delia Clarke
Early Education & Care	Feb 2024	Sarah O'Kelly
Health Sector	Feb 2024	Genevieve Callander
Family Support	Feb 2024	Jennifer Weber
Libraries	Feb 2024	Susie Prestney
Government Primary Schools	Feb 2023	Emma Sutherland

There were no nominations received for the following categories

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative	Feb 2024
Drug & Alcohol Sector	Feb 2023
Early Intervention & Disability	Feb 2023
Health Sector (2 year)	Feb 2023
Independent Education	Feb 2023

K Curson is currently in the process of following up with organisations that may be interested.

Unsuccessful nominations have been notified and offered to attend meetings as associate members.

5. General Business**6.1 Getting to know you – breakout rooms introductions**

K Curson provided an opportunity for committee members to introduce themselves using breakout rooms. Members were to provide an introduction and share information about a project they have started working on this year.



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6.2 3 year old funded kindergarten planning update

Sarah Bowen, 3 year old Kindergarten Capacity Officer. Melton City Council

Cathy De Bono, Kindergarten Engagement Officer. Melton City Council

Registrations for 3 and 4 year old funded kindergarten in 2022 open Wednesday 24 March.

Families are able to complete registrations for both 3 and 4 year old kindergarten on one form. Each kindergarten year is allocated separately and therefore families may not be allocated to the same kindergarten for both years.

Melton City Council have been successful in receiving a grant for kindergarten engagement for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) outreach.

Kindergarten Tick is a current Victorian Government initiative. This initiative is making it easier for families to identify choices and find funded and approved kindergarten programs across sessional kindergartens and long day care settings.

Kindergarten Information sessions will be held on Thursday 25 March and Monday 29 March, these will be online via zoom. Sessions are designed to help parents gather information to help inform their decisions on which kindergarten to enrol their child.

C De Bono informed the committee that she has undertaken a newly created role which focuses on engagement with, and support for families who need assistance in the kindergarten enrolment process, this support can be provided directly to families or service providers. To date this has included both enrolment in both Sessional Kindergarten and long day care settings, C De Bono will share her referral form with the committee and invited organisations to contact her if they were aware of families in need of this support.

Action

C De Bono to share information with K Curson to be shared with the committee.

6.3 Best Start update

Karen Curson, Coordinator Early Years Partnerships. Melton City Council

K Curson shared and discussed the draft logic model to the committee.

The two short term outcomes remain the same as 2020, these are;

- Active Outreach and Engagement
- Service Accessibility

The stretch goals and indicators have been further refined following the information collected using the 2020 Logic Model.

Endorsement of the Best Start Logic Model from the committee was sought.

Action

Best Start Logic Model 2021 – Consensus achieved for endorsement.

6.4 DET update

Billy Nguyen, Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisor. Department of Education and Training

A five hour modeling tool is available for kindergarten services demonstrating different options for services providers for provision of 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten.

A School Readiness Funding (SRF) flyer to encourage providers to access allied health services has been developed. Allied health services have been engaged by the Department

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to ensure that kindergarten services receiving SRF have access to high quality allied health services.

The Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS) has been upgraded and is now live.

Today is National Close the Gap Day, this campaign is working towards a major goal; to close the gap in health and life expectancy outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. New material for Koori Kids Shine has been launched this week, aligning with Close the Gap day.

Action

B Nguyen to share information with K Curson to be shared with the committee.

6.5 DFFH update

No update received.

6.6 NDIS update**Matthew Boyd, Senior Manager Early Childhood Early Intervention. Brotherhood of St Laurence**

There is currently no children on the ECEI waiting list across Brimbank Melton. The Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) are currently focusing of reaching out and finding families and children who are not yet comfortable in coming into the service. M Boyd asked the committee for suggestions on locations where the BSL may need to target for families who require assistance. BSL are well-resourced with interpreters and tools for engagement with families who have English as a second language.

The NDIS Early Childhood Intervention reset discussion paper is currently awaiting approval from the BSL board.

Recruitment process for vacant positions are underway. At this present time, there is still approximately 12 vacant positions within the area.

6.7 First 1000 days – service gaps for children under 3**Karen Curson, Coordinator Early Years Partnerships. Melton City Council**

The working group met on Monday of this week for their first meeting,

Discussions took place to frame the work to be driven by the group, such as unborn reports and engaging with families before they engage with Child Protection.

Individual organisations are doing work in this space through: triage of mothers, helping build agency of mothers and prenatal work. Further discussions included factors that impact engagement such as mistrust of services.

First steps for the working group will be to implement a Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycle, this will consist of a short survey and each organisation will focus on asking engaged families who were initially hard to engage into their individual programs. The survey will ask families: where did you go before to find support and is there somewhere we should have been. In keeping with the Best Start PDSA methodology this will initially focus on a small group of professionals to deliver this survey. Which will provide data to help determine if the right questions are being asked to the right people.



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B Ball highlight the importance of this initiative and how this work will help for future families and children.

6.8 Low birthweight partnership initiative

Carolynne Reich, Coordinator Maternal and Child Health. Melton City Council

North West Melbourne Primary Health Network has commissioned Murdoch Children's Research Institute to co-design and implement a two year project with the aim of improving rates of healthy birth weight in Melton South.

Melton is an increasingly diverse area, with a high proportion of migrant and refugee families who are likely to experience social disadvantage and barriers accessing and engaging with maternity and early childhood health services.

Partners in the grant are

- Djerriwarrh Health Services
- Melton City Council Maternal and Child Health
- Foundation House
- VICSEG New Futures

In the proposed model Djerriwarrh and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) will provide equity-orientated maternity and early childhood health services and group pregnancy care for refugee background women.

Community consultation will be undertaken with the South Sudanese and Burmese community to identify which community is ready to implement group pregnancy care. If this proves acceptable and accessible to the community, it would be sustained by the partner agencies, with the view to expand the model for other communities

6.9 VicHealth Grant – prioritising Children & Young People in the Council and Wellbeing Plan

Mia Lobe, Health and Wellbeing Project Officer. Melton City Council

This year Council has received a three year grant from VicHealth to prioritise children and young people in the next Council and Wellbeing Plan. The first stage of this project will be to consult with children and young people.

To align the VicHealth grant to current projects the Health Promotion Team are proposing that this year's Council's Health Promotion Forum which has previously run as a Mental Health Forum be in the format of an Engagement Forum. The aim of the Forum would be to hear the voices of children and young people around their health and wellbeing and experiences and ideas about living in the City of Melton that can be used to inform the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25. Due to Council and Wellbeing Plan timelines, the Forum is to be held in April.

B Ball stated the voice of children is very important. We need to make the engagement meaningful for their voices to be heard.

Question from the committee were raised on how are they going to get the information needed. M Lobe stated the Health Promotion Team have already decided on what information is needed and now are working on how best to obtain this information.

S O'Kelly suggested engaging with children at kindergarten sessions and advised M Lobe BPA Children's Services would be able to assist. Further suggestions to engage with children in vacation care programs and schools were also heard. E Sutherland also advised Melton Primary school could also assist.

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6.10 Melton: A City for all People evaluation discussion**Karen Curson, Coordinator Early Years Partnerships. City of Melton**

K Curson discussed the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data identifying that our hope is to see a decrease in the percentage of children experiencing vulnerability while there is some change over the four AEDC data collection points over 11 years the change has not been constant, K Curson also noted that the next data collect will occur this year and will reflect children who have experienced the impacts of 2020, COVID-19 pandemic and remote learning in their kindergarten year.

Over the four years of the Melton: A City for all People (MaCFAP) plan, 108 actions have been identified, in the first three years of implementation, 92 actions were completed with only one postponed. There are another 15 actions that are still underway as part of the Year 4 Action Plan.

The committee discussed the external impacts that have had an impact on service systems from 2017 to 2021. The impact of government legislation: changes and funding agreement, population and local impacts as well as impacts to the early education and care sector and the health and wellbeing sector were highlighted by K Curson. In addition to the impacts that were noted the group discussed the inclusion of population diversity and also noted that the impacts of COVID-19 are expected to be ongoing and long term.

Action

K Curson to share evaluation presentation with the committee.

7. Other Business

B Ball invited attendees to stay online after the meeting with C De Bono to discuss transportation impact project.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday 27 May 2021 commencing at 10:00am, Botanica Springs Childrens and Community Centre, 249 Clarkes Road, Brookfield.

9. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 11.42am.