



MINUTES

EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP

held on 27 May 2021 at 10.00am, online – MS Teams

Present:

Appointed Members

Cr Deeming, Councillor

S O'Kelly, BPA Children's Services

G Callander, Djerriwarrh Health Services

J Weber, Caroline Chisholm Society

M Boyd, Brotherhood of St Laurence

J Galvin, Noah's Ark

M Costa, Melton West Primary School

E Sutherland, Melton Primary School

H Zwick, VICSEG New Futures

B Hill, St Lawrence of Brindisi Catholic Primary School – PROXY
attended for R Wilkinson

Observers

K O'Toole, Community Member

A Holmes, Tweddle Child & Family Health Service

J Gemoh, The Salvation Army

E Davis, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) –
PROXY attended for A Connor Simon

J Scott, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) – PROXY
attended for A Connor Simon

R Macumber, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) –
PROXY attended for A Connor Simon

B Nguyen, Department of Education and Training

M Miltiadous, Department of Family, Fairness and Housing

K Curson, City of Melton – (ex-officio)

L Xerri, City of Melton – (minute taker)

Guests:

E Sfameni, Melton Christian College

S Bowen, City of Melton

Quorum: A minimum of 5 appointed members will form a quorum for each meeting.

Chairperson: G Callander, Djerriwarrh Health Services

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1. Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed all attendees to the meeting and proceeded with the Acknowledgment of Country. *'Melton City Council acknowledges that the land it now occupies has a history that began with the Indigenous occupants, the Kulin Nation.*

Council pays its respects to the Kulin Nation people and their Elders and descendant's past and present. Council extends this respect to the Elders of other Aboriginal groups here today.'

2. Apologies

Cr Vandenberg, Councillor
S Mudie, TRY Australia
J Taylor, Department of Education and Training
S Prestney, City of Melton
B Ball, City of Melton

3. Declaration of interests and/or conflict of interests

Nil.

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

Moved: Sarah Bowen Seconded: Matthew Boyd

That the minutes of the Early Years Partnership Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2021 were adopted by Council at the ordinary meeting held 10 May 2021

5. Business Arising

Nil.

6. General Business**6.1 Speed Networking**

Opportunity provided for Committee members to network in small groups.

6.2 3 year old funded kindergarten update

S Bowen advised that the 3 year old Kindergarten Capacity Officer role will conclude at the end of June 2021. The Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) between the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Council has been agreed to and is now available online¹. The estimated data used to develop the plan will be reviewed yearly. The KISP will support planning and funding of Kindergarten Infrastructure to meet community need for kindergarten moving forward.

¹ [Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan - City of Melton](#)



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DET recently released an Early Childhood Workforce Strategy paper². S O'Kelly highlighted the difficulty of recruitment and retention as an issue for educators with diploma and certificate qualification as well as degree trained kindergarten teachers.

6.3 Best Start Update

K Curson shared that Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycles have trialed practitioners asking families if they are up to date with MCH visits, engagement in the PSFO program and Supported Playgroups in home support outreach and accessibility.

Kellie Robertson has been completing additional hours to support Best Start to allow K Curson to participate in the development of the new Council and Wellbeing Plan.

6.4 Department of Education and Training (DET) update

B Nguyen reminded the Committee the Early Years Awards nominations are closing on Monday 14 June and Innovation Grants on Monday 21 June.

Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) Program is trialing a Specialised Equipment Trial (SET) with loan equipment for children with significant disabilities. B Nguyen provided an update on training available to educators: Respectful Relationships and Early Learning Leadership Forums. As well as an overview of new items on the School Readiness Funding (SRF) menu. J Weber noted the need for a connection between the home and education environment such as Abecedarian Approach suggesting that this may be a good addition to items on the SRF menu.

Action

K Curson to circulate update prior to minutes being sent out.

6.5 Department of Family Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

The current caseload for Brimbank Melton Child Protection (CP) is 1210 cases, including: 196 cases at the investigation stage, 513 subject to protective intervention, 482 subject to protection orders, 157 are Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander clients and approximately 622 children are in out of home care. Currently there are four unborn reports, however there are other reports that are attached with older sibling.

M Miltiadous also advised CP intake is moving to a centralised system.

Increased reporting as well as staffing shortages are impacting CP. There is an expected 900 births at Sunshine Hospital for September, this high birth rate will have a flow on effect to services providers, including CP

Orange Door location Melton Brimbank region is Sunshine, there are discussions occurring for an outreach office location in Melton. M Miltiadous noted that 60% of referrals to ChildFIRST are from Family Violence reports from Victoria Police, with 2-5% resulting in referrals to Integrated Family Services.

Current trends observed: higher number of family violence concerns and school refusal/nonattendance, kinship carers not coping with the care of older children.

6.6 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) update

With the current lockdown engaging emergency supports for families is a priority. M Boyd noted long waiting lists, which is influenced by families on multiple waiting lists, further impacted by a thin market of services providers who are also finding it difficult to fill vacant positions.

² [Early Childhood Workforce Strategy Paper](#)

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M Boyd highlighted the Department Health Services, Commonwealth Continuity Support Program for clients who are not eligible for NDIS will be continued until 2025.

6.7 First 1000 days update

J Weber advised the next meeting will be held in August, pressure and demands on service delivery in the current and changing COVID environment has impacted this work. The plan for this meeting will be to look at the what each service is undertaking and where innovation sits. M Miltiadous highlighted the benefit of all children seeing a Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nurse and identifying ways for continued engagement in this service is a priority.

6.8 Early Years Strategic Planning – Identifying long term outcomes

K Curson presented a range of draft long-term outcomes to support the development of early years strategic planning, background data has been discussed and feedback obtained from previous Committee meetings. Draft outcomes were divided into three groups: children, families & carers and the service sector. Feedback from the Committee was provided.

Action

K Curson to consolidate feedback and to bring back to the Committee at a future meeting.

6.9 Terms of Reference (TOR) update and discussion

K Curson advised the committee the TOR is due to be updated. Members were asked to review and provide feedback.

Action

K Curson to send TOR to committee.

Committee member to review the TOR and provide feedback to K Curson.

K Curson to add as an agenda item for the July meeting.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on 22 July commencing at 10am, venue to be confirmed

8. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 12.03pm