

Minutes

Families and Children Advisory Committee



Date	Tuesday, 28 October 2025
Time	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location	Collingwood Town Hall – Wurundjeri Room
Chair	Deputy Mayor, Cr Sarah McKenzie
Minute taker	Kayley Wilson (FY&CS Branch Business Administration & Project Support Officer)
Content Manager Reference	D25/0457266

Statement of Recognition of Wurundjeri Land

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

Attendees

Councillor/s	Deputy Mayor, Cr Sarah McKenzie & Cr Meca Ho
Committee members	Ali Duncan, Brielle Pope, Hayden Oberin, Alex Payne-Billard, Claire Franz-Flack, Ryan Carters, Jane Furphy
Council Officers	Angela Morcos (Family, Youth and Children's Services Branch Manager), Jesse Grubb (Family Services Coordinator), Marie Brancatella (FY&CS Branch Administration Team Leader), Kayley Wilson (FY&CS Branch Business Administration & Project Support Officer)
Guests	Patrick O’Gorman (Senior Governance Coordinator)
Apologies	Stephanie O’Collins (Committee Member), Lauren Streifer (Committee Member) & Deanne Halpin (Children’s Services Coordinator)

Item number	Item title or subject	Minute notes
1.	Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country	Deputy Mayor welcomed the Committee Members and Acknowledged Country. Councillors and Committee Members introduced themselves.
2.	Declarations of conflict of interests of interest	This item addressed was addressed by the Senior Governance Coordinator when discussing Agenda Item 4. None declared.
3.	Welcome and Introductions	Deputy Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees to their first advisory committee meeting. Introductions were exchanged amongst all attendees, where their background and reasons for joining the committee were mentioned.
4.	Governance and integrity overview	An overview of the item was provided by the Senior Governance Coordinator which outlined the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the Committee’s Terms of Reference including attendance, conflict of interest, public access to minutes, standards of conduct and public statements by members.

		Action: Terms Of Reference to be resent to Committee members, when circulating the Minutes.
5.	2026 Meeting Schedule	<p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings would be scheduled during school terms • Meetings would be scheduled Wednesdays between 10am to 12noon • Collingwood was a convenient central location • Other venues/rooms and hybrid meeting capability would also be investigated • A meeting would be scheduled at an appropriate time to ensure Committee feedback and input into Council's 2026-2027 Draft Budget
6 and 7.	Meeting Overview, and Council's work with children and families	<p>Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services presented an overview of Council's work relating to children and families, which included the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about Council's work will help to shape the 2026 Committee Workplan • Council's work is broad and includes planning, supporting, and direct service delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maternal and Child Health ○ Immunisation ○ Playgroups ○ Parent information, support, and short-term case management ○ Early childhood education and care ○ Management of the Connie Benn Centre – an integrated child and family hub ○ Youth Services ○ Swim schools and parent-friendly exercise classes ○ Parks and open space ○ Libraries ○ Supporting arts organisations and creative industry to provide family-focused programs ○ Family-friendly festivals and events such as Carols and New Year's Eve <p>General points of discussion raised by Committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood education and care services, and importance of quality and safety • Reach, location, and accessibility of programs • Neighbourhood houses in Yarra • Deputy Mayor noted the full extent of services and programs offered or supported by Council are often not commonly known, until people need to use a particular service depending on their life stage.
8.	Spotlight on child safety	<p>Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services provided an overview of reviews into and changes for the early childhood education and care sector in response to recent allegations about children's safety.</p> <p>General points of discussion raised by Committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's roles in working with other early childhood education and care service providers in the municipality • Importance of everyone in the community speaking up if they have concerns about a child's safety

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Mayor acknowledged that whilst Council cannot regulate or monitor compliance of non-Council services because this is the role of the Victorian Government, Council can play other roles such as advocacy. <p>Deputy Mayor left the meeting, and Cr Ho assumed the role of Chair.</p>
9.	Committee workplan	<p>Matters raised by the Committee for consideration as part of the 2026 Workplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility Liveability Diversity Child Safety Sustainability and climate change Services to meet diverse family needs and structures Community engagement, including consultation and engagement with young children and young people <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Wellbeing Snapshots from Council's Health and Wellbeing Profile to be circulated to Committee members. Committee members to be kept up to date with child safety reforms. Committee members to be notified of upcoming engagement opportunities. <p>Secretariat to confirm how Committee members can collaborate outside of Advisory Committee meetings.</p>
Other Business		<p>The following matters of general business were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil
Meeting closed		The meeting closed at 12:02 pm
Next scheduled meeting		The next meeting will be scheduled for early to mid-February 2026.