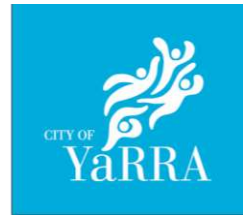


Minutes

Families and Children Advisory Committee



Date	Wednesday, 06 May 2026
Time	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location	Collingwood Town Hall – Wurundjeri Room
Chair	Cr Sarah McKenzie
Minute taker	Kayley Wilson (FY&CS Branch Business Administration & Project Support Officer)
Content Manager Reference	D26/0192300

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	Cr Sarah McKenzie, Cr Meca Ho
Committee members	Brielle Pope, Claire Franz-Flack, Stephanie O’Collins, Hayden Oberin, Ryan Carters,
Council Officers	Angela Morcos (Family, Youth and Children's Services Branch Manager), Jesse Grubb (Family Services Coordinator), Kayley Wilson (FY&CS Branch Business Administration & Project Support Officer)
Guests	Carmen Cappello (Pre-School Field Officer), John Brockway (Chief Financial Officer)
Apologies	Ali Duncan (Committee member); Alex Payne-Billard (Committee member); Jane Furphy (Committee member)

Item number	Item title or subject	Minute notes
1.	Welcome	Cr McKenzie welcomed the Committee Members and Acknowledged Country
2.	Declarations of conflict of interest	None declared
3.	Adoption of the minutes from the previous meeting	Approved
4.	Business arising from the previous meeting	<p>Action: The Child Safety Update presentation to be circulated with the minutes. - Completed</p> <p>Action: Committee members to email if they have any further feedback on Priority of Access Policy & Kinder Reform Update. -</p>

		<p>Completed</p> <p>Action: The secretariat will collect the notes made from the committee members and record the additional comments. - Completed</p> <p>Action: Child Friendly Cities Presentation will be scheduled for a later meeting. - Completed</p> <p>Action: Committee members to email if they have any further feedback on Supported Playgroups and Parent Education Programs Presentation- Completed</p> <p>Action: Potential invitees for future meetings to be progressed offline. - Completed</p>
5.	Child Safe Reforms	<p>An overview of the item was provided by the Manager of Family, Youth and Children’s Services which outlined the following matters.</p> <p>An update was provided on Child Safety Reforms at both Victorian and Commonwealth levels.</p> <p>Victorian Interim Report: Summarises key evidence and emerging issues with a final report which may include recommendations due 30th July 2026.</p> <p>Commonwealth Reports: Report released by the Commonwealth published in late March which includes 23 recommendations across several areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory • Market Intervention • Workforce • Funding <p>It was noted that these reforms largely align with existing practices within Council-operated early childhood services, and no significant additional work is anticipated at this stage. Recent participation in a Commonwealth spot check has also provided insight into new regulatory monitoring by the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Supporting Families to find Quality Early Childhood Services: New online resources developed by the Victorian Government to support families in choosing and engaging with early childhood services was shared.</p> <p>Actions: The PowerPoint presentation, including links to State Government child safety resources, is to be circulated to Committee members following the meeting.</p>
6.	Child Friendly Cities Presentation	<p>An overview of the item was provided by the Pre- School Field Officer which outlined the following matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarra’s commitment as a signatory to the Child Friendly Cities Charter.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of engaging with young children. • Current and past engagement practices in Yarra. • Trends and challenges in engagement. • How to best consult and the importance of providing space, voice, audience, and influence to ensure meaningful engagement. • Examples of successful participation models from other municipalities. • Key considerations for Council when completing consultation and engagement aligned with Council's recently endorsed Community Engagement Policy 2026-2029. <p>Actions: PowerPoint presentation and a PDF Guide for Consulting Children to be circulated with the minutes.</p>
7.	Council's draft Budget FY27	<p>An overview of the item was provided by the Chief Financial Officer which outlined the following matters.</p> <p>The budget responds to significant cost pressures while maintaining services within the 2.75% rate cap. Council is adopting a "back to basics" approach, focusing on continued core services and infrastructure. A \$40M capital works program will deliver essential upgrades (roads, footpaths, and public spaces).</p> <p>Key priorities relevant to this Committee include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining children's and youth services and investing in upgrades of some facilities. • Investment in open spaces, such as new parks and playground upgrades. • Support for diversity and inclusion initiatives. • Improvements to accessibility infrastructure. • Ongoing focus on child safety and community safety programs. • Continued delivery of engagement programs and library services. <p>Overall, the budget maintains existing service levels while continuing to establish a strong framework for future delivery.</p> <p>The Manager of Family, Youth and Children's Services reiterated to share your input on the draft Budget for 2026/27 on "Your Say Yarra" before consultation closes at 11.59pm Sunday 17th May 2026.</p> <p>In response to a question, the Manager of Family, Youth and Children's Services noted that service delivery levels are being maintained, with no reduction in services. Responding to the Victorian Government kindergarten reform has required the employment of additional staff and expansion of some kindergarten groups to offer more hours per week for eligible children.</p> <p>Actions: The Draft Budget presentation is to be circulated with the minutes.</p>

8.	Other Business	<p>The following matters of general business were raised:</p> <p>Councillor Sarah McKenzie noted that the Dill-be-din Kindergarten recently received an “Exceeding” rating under the National Quality Standards, highlighting the strong performance of Council-operated early years services.</p> <p>There was discussion about how to maximise engagement with Committee members during the quarterly meetings, and in-between meetings, including how Committee members can seek input from their networks to contribute to relevant strategies, policies, plans and projects. This feedback will be incorporated into planning for upcoming meetings.</p> <p>Actions: The Manager of Family, Youth and Children’s Services to share recognition of Dill-be-Den Kindergarten’s National Quality Standard achievement with relevant internal teams.</p>
Meeting closed		The meeting closed at 11:46 am
Next scheduled meeting		The next meeting is scheduled for 26th August 2026.