

Minutes

Community Health Services- Campaign Advisory Committee



Date	20 May 2026
Time	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location	Online teams meeting
Chair	Cr Sophie Wade
Minute taker	Gaye Stewart, Yarra City Council
Content Manager Reference	D26/224700

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 Sophie Wade
Committee members	Natalie Savin, Mike Naismith, Chris Dite, Elizabeth Gherardin, Heather Hindle, Glenda Scalise
Council Officers	Brooke Colbert (General Manager Community Strengthening), Jillian Dent (Senior Coordinator Policy and Partnerships), Gaye Stewart (Policy Advisor)
Guests	Nil
Apologies	Mayor Cr Stephen Jolly, Cr Sarah McKenzie, Robyn Williams, Dr Anita Munoz, Malcolm McCall (Manager Ageing, Equity and Community Development)

Item #	Item title or subject	Minute notes
1.	Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country	Cr Sophie Wade acknowledged Country and welcomed the Committee.
2.	Declarations of conflict of interests of interest	No conflicts of interests were declared
3.	Governance	Role of the Committee and pathway to Council understood.
4.	Confirmation of previous minutes and actions	4.1 Adoption of minutes (22 April 2026) 4.2 Actions arising: See update section of minutes for responses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• date for date with Minister• request release of cohealth review report• possibility of banners and additional signage• Town hall public meeting
5.	Context update	5.1 Independent Review of GP services at cohealth <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was discussed again that the report of the independent review of GP services at cohealth has still not been released.

- It was agreed that persistence in requesting the report is required to have full picture of the outcomes of the review.
- Mayor sent a letter to the chair of cohealth requesting their cooperation in its release on 19 May 2026.
- It was suggested that three parties involved in the review need to agree for the report to be released.
- It was reported that an FOI request has been made for release of the report by Save our Community Health group. (unconfirmed) and they suggest the report will be released soon (25 May 2026 was mentioned).

5.2 Budget Announcement

The [announcement](#) and what is known was presented.

- The Australian Government is providing up to \$1.5 million to cohealth, ensuring services remain open at the Collingwood, Fitzroy and Kensington sites while cohealth undertakes improvements to its operations.
- This funding is time-limited and conditional for up to 12 months while cohealth makes changes; supported by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network.
- Changes expected include a strengthening of senior management and board governance, and a new integrated and sustainable general practice model of care.

Public meeting:

- A public meeting was held at Fitzroy Town Hall on 14th May 2026 to celebrate the funding announcement.
- However, it acknowledged there was still work to be done to secure long term stability.
- The public meeting was attended by approximately 100 people.

Chair asked for Committee members to share any updates or information they had heard since the last meeting, summarised below:

- Kensington meeting (16th May 2026) was well attended (200+) and shared many of the issues, from the Fitzroy meeting.
- North Western Primary Health Network are putting a structure in place to support changes at cohealth and will establish a community working group. (unconfirmed)
- The closure of the Sobering Centre run by cohealth was in the news this week, but cohealth was not heavily mentioned in report, nor was it linked to closures of other services.
- There are frequent mentions about a rebuild on the Collingwood site with social housing but there is no evidence

		<p>of traction on this proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is consistent views from the community that it is necessary for cohealth to reengage with grass roots community members in the design and delivery of services. • Members expressed the importance of the site to the community and needing assurances that cohealth cannot sell. • Questions about counselling and pharmacy services still need answers.
6.	Priority advocacy items	<p>6.1 Public Campaign Action</p> <p>Following a Council resolution on 12 May 2026,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • banners will be erected on Richmond Town Hall on Friday (22/4) and the following week at Fitzroy and Collingwood. • Posters and corflutes available at Town Halls and libraries • State and federal Ministers and Chair of cohealth have received letters. • Mayor informally met with head of staff for Hon Mark Butler MP Minister for Health today. A meeting with the minister is still being planned. <p>There will be videos with Mayor to continue the messaging.</p> <p>Committee members were encouraged to pick up a corflute and ask friends to pick one up.</p> <p>6.2 Other Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers will send copy of campaign banners/posters to the committee and confirm distribution points to obtain corflutes and poster copies. • Officers to investigate and advise committee if there is a consultative or working group being established to support cohealth improvements.
7.	Other Business	No matters of general business were raised.
	Meeting closed	The meeting closed at 6:39pm.
	Next scheduled meeting	Next meeting as per Terms of Reference will be 29 July 2026 .