Our Vision

A City which values its heritage, cultural diversity, sense of place and natural environment.

A progressive City which is prosperous, sustainable and socially cohesive, with a strong community spirit.
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VENUE
Staff Room, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school

HOUR
5.30pm

PRESENT

Committee Members
Mayor Robert Bria (Presiding Member)
Cr Evonne Moore
Mr Phil Baranski (entered the meeting at 5.32pm)
Ms Monica Di Lernia

Staff
Sharon Perkins (General Manager, Corporate Services)
Alice Parsons (Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School)

APOLOGIES
Ms Megan Halliwell

ABSENT
Nil

TERMS OF REFERENCE:
The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee is established to fulfil the following functions:

- to provide feedback on the St Peters Child Care & Pre-School Centre’s Strategic Plan and Business Plan; and
- to undertake general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ST PETERS CHILD CARE CENTRE & PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2018

Cr Moore moved that the minutes of the meeting of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee held on 26 February 2018 be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Ms Monica Di Lernia and carried.

2. PRESIDING MEMBER’S COMMUNICATION
Nil

3. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE
Nil

4. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE
Nil

5. WRITTEN NOTICES OF MOTION
Nil

6. STAFF REPORTS
6.1 DIRECTORS QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT – MARCH 2018

REPORT AUTHOR: Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool
GENERAL MANAGER: Acting General Manager, Corporate Services
CONTACT NUMBER: 8366 4585
FILE REFERENCE: S/00913
ATTACHMENTS: A

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the Committee with a status report on the activities of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool for the period ending 30 March 2018.

BACKGROUND

The Centre has been in operation since 1976. The Centre is licenced to accommodate 105 children per day, however to ensure the high quality of care the Centre is known for is maintained, the number of available places has been capped at 94 places per day.

The key activities completed during the 2018 March Quarter, together with actions completed in previous Quarters, as required by the Centre’s Strategic and Business Plans, are included in the Discussion Section of this report.

RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & POLICIES

This report informs the Council on the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool activities and supports Council attaining:

Outcome 1: Social Equity: A connected, accessible and pedestrian-friendly community

Objective 1: Convenient and accessible services, information and facilities.
Strategy 1.2: Maximise access to services, facilities, information and activities.
Strategy 1.3: Design and provide safe, high quality facilities and spaces for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.

Objective 4: A strong, health, resilient and inclusive community.
Strategy 4.2: Encourage and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.
Strategy 4.3: Provide spaces and facilities for people to meet, learn and connect with each other.

The National Quality Framework has been revised and is accessible by Centres from the 1 October 2017, with the new framework to be implemented in Centres no later than the 1 February 2018.

The Centre’s policies and procedures are reviewed and updated over a twelve (12) month to two (2) year period, in line with National Quality Standards and the Centre’s Continuous Review Policy.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

EXTERNAL ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Nil

SOCIAL ISSUES

The Centre actively promotes a policy of inclusion for all children and their families. Its location in a mixed use area, results in a potential client base of working parents who live and work in close proximity to the Centre.

The information provided in the report has no direct social issues which need to be considered.
CULTURAL ISSUES
Not Applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
Not Applicable.

RESOURCE ISSUES
Not Applicable.

RISK MANAGEMENT
Not Applicable.

CONSULTATION
- Committee Members
  Not Applicable
- Community
  Not Applicable
- Staff
  Not Applicable
- Other Agencies
  Not Applicable

DISCUSSION
Child Numbers
The Centre is licensed for a maximum of 105 children daily; however to ensure a high quality of care, the daily attendance numbers are capped at 94 per day. The mix of the numbers per age group may change on a needs basis. For example, the Centre has up to 28 under two (2) year olds, up to 30 two (2) to three (3) year olds and up to 36 over three (3) year olds. The average number of children for which services were provided for the 2018 March Quarter is detailed in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Child</th>
<th>Staffing Ratio</th>
<th>Number Allowed at the Centre (maximum)</th>
<th>Number of Children - Average for the Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under Twos (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks to 24 months</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks to 24 months</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Twos (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years to 3 years</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years to 3 years</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Threes (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years to 4 years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Years to 5 years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>80.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sessions where 90 children attended for the quarter</td>
<td>12 days out of a total of 64 days</td>
<td>17 days out of a total of 64 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average attendance – Year-to-Date 87.77
While the Centre is licenced for 105 long day care places, to ensure that the Centre continues to provide above standard quality care, the Centre has limited the number of available places to 94. Due to a recent increase in new Centres being opened and to allow the Centre time to build to the new (increased from 80 places to 94 places in February 2016) licenced capacity, the 2017-2018 Budget was based on providing 90 places.

Due to competition from new Childcare Centres being established within the area, the utilisation of Centre for the 2018 March Quarter is at 90% capacity. The overall utilisation is largely impacted by limited demand for care on Monday's and Friday's. It should be noted that other established Centres are also feeling the impact of the increasing number of Childcare Centres opening up throughout the region.

Despite lower than desired capacity, feedback which has been received from within the industry is that the Centre is the preferred option for long day Childcare.

**Staff to Child Ratios**

The Centre is required by the National Quality Standards to maintain a minimum Educator to Child Ratio at all times. The minimum Educator to Child ratios are detailed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Grouping</th>
<th>Educator to Child Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-24 months</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 months – 36 months</td>
<td>1:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 months to 5 years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Figure 1, as at the end of March 2018, the Centre continues to exceed the Educator to Child ratio in the Over Three’s (3) only. Due to the strong demand for places in the three (3) and under age group, without appointing additional staff, it is difficult for the Centre to exceed the minimum Educator to Child ratio within this age group, while maintaining full Centre capacity.

**FIGURE 1: EDUCATOR TO CHILD RATIOS**

![Educator to Child Ratios Chart]

**Staffing**

To ensure that the Centre meets the required staff to child ratios, the Full-time Equivalent Educator positions required are:

- Under 2's 7.00 FTE
- 2 -3 years 6.00 FTE
- Over 3’s 4.00 FTE
To ensure the ongoing continuity of care, during periods of staff absences, the Centre utilises Educators from within the casual pool. Not only does this ensure that children are cared for by familiar Educators when their primary care givers are absent from the Centre, it ensures that operational costs are maintained, as there is less reliance on engaging temporary contract staff through temporary contract labour hire agencies to cover absences.

The staff numbers have kept relatively steady since the opening of the new room from 2016. The Centre has total 28 employees, which consist of 3 management and administration staff, 13 full-time, 6 part-time, and 7 casual staff as shown in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2: STAFF NUMBERS BY EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY**

![Staff Numbers Diagram]

*The Casual Child Care Workers includes staff working in rooms and all relief staff.*

The Centre currently has one (1) vacancy, (the Team Leader – Diamond Room). Due to a number of fixed term contracts (Maternity Leave backfill) due to conclude by 30 June 2018, to provide development opportunities to existing staff, an Expression of Interest was presented to internal staff to be seconded to the position until 30 June 2018. The recruitment process for the permanent replacement will commence once the return to work arrangements for the staff on Maternity Leave have been finalised.

**Universal Access to Early Childhood Education**

Funding can be claimed for every four (4) year old child who remains at the Centre in the twelve (12) months prior to full-time schooling and has access to fifteen (15) hours of preschool services, providing the child is not accessing a preschool service from another external service, such as a Department of Education Preschool or Kindergarten.

For the year-to-date period to March 2018, the Centre has received $3,791 under the Universal Access Scheme for the children utilising the Centre for the pre-school service. The funding at this stage is being used to offset the salary costs of the Early Childhood Teachers.

**National Quality Standard**

Staff practices, policies and procedures are continually reviewed in line with the new National Quality Standards and a Quality Improvement Plan has been completed. The Centre has undergone its first round of Rating and Assessment. The Centre received an overall rating of ‘Working Towards’.

The seven (7) areas identified under the National Quality Standard are:

- Educational program and practice;
- Children’s health and safety;
- Physical environment;
- Staffing arrangements (including the number of staff looking after children);
- Relationships with children;
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities; and
- Leadership and service management.
The Centre is set to be reviewed annually under the National Quality Standards. In preparation for the Annual National Quality Standard Review, the Centre's Director and Educational Leader have been benchmarking with other Centres to share knowledge and gain ideas. The Centre has yet to have a date set for the next assessment. Revised National Quality Standards are currently being rolled with a commencement date of 1st February 2018, therefore the assessment will be undertaken under the revised Quality Standards. Staffs are currently being educated with the requirement of the revised standards in preparation for the assessment.

Since the initial ratings and assessment review, the Centre has:

- implemented an extended program for the children which visualises the links between the curriculum and the five (5) learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) within the classrooms;
- produced and implemented check sheets to ensure that allergy information is updated; and
- had a representative for the Gowrie Institute of Training, visit the Centre to provide assistance to Educators on how to document critical reflection focussed on the operations of the rooms.

In addition, the courtyard, next to the kitchen has been transformed into a suitability focused yard, with raised garden beds, a compost bin, a worm farm (still to come) for projects related to protecting our environment.

**Strategic Plan**

The Centre’s Five (5) Year Strategic and Business Plans have been approved by the Committee and the Council. The Centre’s Business Plan established Key Result Areas/Targets. The achievement of the outcomes up March 2018, are contained in Attachment A.

**OPTIONS**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION**

The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school is recognised as a leader in the provision of high quality child care. It is expected that this will continue. The Centre on average for the December quarter, has 80 children accessing the service on a daily basis, with an expectation that this will increase throughout the year. Despite the increase in licenced places the Centre continues to maintain a waiting list for 2018, with a significant proportion of these referrals coming from word of mouth.

**COMMENTS**

Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the report be received and noted.

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Mr Phil Baranski entered the meeting at 5.32pm.

*Cr Moore moved:*

*That the report be received and noted.*

*Seconded by Mr Phil Baranski and carried.*
7. OTHER BUSINESS
   Nil

8. NEXT MEETING
   Monday 23 July 2018

9. CLOSURE
   There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 5.50pm.

Mayor Robert Bria
PRESIDING MEMBER

Minutes Confirmed on ____________________________
   (date)