St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee Minutes

25 February 2019

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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City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters
Minutes of the Meeting of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee held on 25 February 2019

VENUE 
Staff Room, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school

HOUR 
5.30pm

PRESENT 
Committee Members 
Cr Evonne Moore (Presiding Member)  
Cr Kester Moorhouse  
Ms Monica Di Lernia  
Ms Georgia Brodribb  
Mr Bill Fuller 

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

APLOGIES 
Nil

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;  
• to undertake general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre; and  
• to execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ST PETERS CHILD CARE CENTRE & PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2018

Ms Monica Di Lernia moved that the minutes of the meeting of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee held on 22 October 2018 be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Ms Georgia Brodribb and carried.

2. PRESIDING MEMBER’S COMMUNICATION

The Presiding Member welcomed all Members to the first meeting of the Committee.

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 – DECEMBER 2018

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

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Quarterly report is to provide information in respect to the following:

- Provide comments on the Centre’s Strategic Plan and Business Plan prepared by Centre Management for the Child Care Centre.
- Undertake, under the direction of Council and on behalf of Council, the general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre.
- To execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.
- To do anything necessary, expedient or incidental to performing or discharging the functions of the Committee as listed in the terms of Reference or to achieving its objectives.

This report provides the Committee with a status report on the activities of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool for the period 21 December 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 Quarter ended December 2018, 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, healthy, 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 operations of Childcare Centres and Preschools are governed by the National Quality Framework.

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 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. To meet family needs, the attendance numbers are increased on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with the available spaces capped at 98 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 December 2018 Quarter is detailed in Table 1 below.
TABLE 1 – CHILD NUMBERS

<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></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This Year</td>
</tr>
<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>12.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks to 24 months</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.66</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>14.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years to 3 years</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.00</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>17.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Year to 5 years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sessions where 90 children attended for the Quarter</td>
<td>44 days out of a total of 60 days</td>
<td>45 days out of a total of 60 days</td>
<td>91.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average attendance – Year to Date

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 an average of 94 places. Due to an increase in new Centres being opened within the local area and across the metropolitan area in general, the 2018-2019 Budget has been set at 90 places.

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 2 – MINIMUM EDUCATOR TO CHILD RATIOS

<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, 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.

To meet the demand for peak days, the number of spaces has been increased to 98 places per day for Tuesdays & Wednesdays. While the Centre is capped at an average of 94 places per day, increasing the number of available spaces to 98 on Tuesdays to Wednesdays, has enabled the Centre to maintain occupancy, with the December quarter being 103% of the Centre budgeted capacity.

The year-to-date utilisation has increased from 98.7% in the September Quarter to 102% of Budgeted capacity. The increase flexibility in being able to match daily available spaces with demand, has driven the increased utilisation. It should be noted that with the current spread of demand across the week, given the current staffing numbers, there is no further capacity to increase the capped places beyond 98 places.
FIGURE 1: STAFF TO CHILD RATIO

Staffing

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

- 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
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 December 2018, the Centre has received $2,677 under the Universal Access Scheme for the children utilising the Centre for the pre-school service. The funding has been 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 a round of Rating and Assessment. The Centre received an overall rating of ‘Meeting’ under the revised framework.

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
- 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 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was submitted to the Education Standards Board on 17 August 2018. The Educations and Standard Boards assessor’s visited the Centre to conduct the Ratings & Assessment on Wednesday 10 October 2018. The final report was received on 3 December 2018, with the Centre receiving an overall result of ‘Meeting’ under the revised The National Quality Framework which came into effect on 1 February 2018. A copy of the final report is contained in Attachment A.

Since the initial ratings and assessment review, the following has been implemented at the Centre:

- 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
- a representative from the Gowrie Institute of Training, visited the Centre to provide assistance to Educators on how to document critical reflection focussed on the operations of the rooms.

In addition, the courtyard adjacent to the kitchen has been transformed into a sustainability focused area, with raised garden beds, a compost bin and a worm farm, for projects relating to protecting our environment.

Work Health and Safety

At the October Committee Meeting a report from Mr Colin Thornton of Treevolution was presented on the heath and structural integrity of the River Red Gum (Eucalyptus camaldulensis) and Sugar Gum (Eucalyptus cladocalyx) located within the St Peters Child Care Centre. A copy of Mr Thornton’s report is contained in Attachment B.

The Council’s City Arborist advised, that the method for the long term management of the two (2) eucalypts within the rear outdoor play space of the Child Care Centre can be best described as speeding up or mimicking the ageing process of the trees, known as Veteran Tree management.
Veteran Tree management involves slowly and gradually reducing the most extended branches, which then encourages new growth within the tree canopy and therefore continually providing pruning options to remove taller, longer branches which reduces the overall ‘target’, which in this case is the area below the tree that branches may fall.

The staged removal of the third tier branches, followed by the removal of the second tier branches to leave a smaller stout tree with a reduced target whilst retaining most of the benefits of having a tree particularly in a location such as this.

Older, over mature native trees, managed this way become an important habitat location for birds nesting in hollows and other animals and invertebrates. The retention of the tree using this style of tree management could result in the tree become an amazing asset for the Centre and a valuable learning tool by way of installing bird boxes for example, searching for geckos etc.

This methodology is described in further detail in Section 7.0 Tree Two - Future Management Options of the report (Attachment B20) and outlined in the Table 3 below.

**TABLE 3 – FUTURE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 April 2018</td>
<td>Initial tree inspection – Veteran tree management with crown reduction by 10%.</td>
<td>Before 7 June 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June 2019</td>
<td>Re-inspection to determine outcomes of initial Veteran Tree Management. Potential reduction pruning to further encourage the formation of released dormant buds.</td>
<td>Within 4 week of identified inspection date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June 2020</td>
<td>Ongoing inspection and reduction works to reduce overall crown spread to a manageable structure and form a crown size conducive to the retention of a veteran tree in the Urban environment.</td>
<td>Within 4 week of identified inspection date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every three (3)</td>
<td>Ongoing inspection and veteran tree management of newly formed crown structure and management of epicormics growth.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years from 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first stage of pruning, which involved the reduction of the crown by 10% was completed in May 2018.

**Strategic Plan**

The Centre’s 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 to December 2018, are contained in Attachment C.

**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 September Quarter has 90 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 2019, with a significant proportion of these referrals coming from word of mouth.
COMMENTS

Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

Mr Bill Fuller moved:

That the report be received and noted.

Seconded by Ms Monica Di Lernia and carried.
7. OTHER BUSINESS
   Nil

8. NEXT MEETING
   Monday 27 May 2019

9. CLOSURE
   There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6.19pm.

Cr Evonne Moore
PRESIDING MEMBER

Minutes Confirmed on _____________________________

(date)