



# Terms of Reference

City of Melbourne

Family and Children's Advisory Committee

2020 - 2023

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## Purpose

The City of Melbourne Family and Children's Advisory Committee (FCAC) was established in August 2007 and brings together people with broad and diverse knowledge and experience of issues relating to families and children. The FCAC is an important point of contact between Council and families with children from 0 – 12 years.

The purpose of the FCAC is to provide the Council with advice on family and child related issues that can be dealt with at Council level. Council has roles and responsibilities at both a local and neighbourhood level and as the capital city of Victoria. The Committee will work with the Council to address issues, develop alternatives and assist with the identification of preferred solutions as part of Council's decision making process.

The Committee will advise on the implementation of the Council Plan 2017-2021 and new Council Plan once endorsed, safeguarding the interests of children and families as well as supporting broader community interests and opportunities. The Committee's role will be advisory and is not a decision making body.

## Objectives

Advise on issues relevant to the children and families within the municipality:

- Assist to achieve and embed the Council Plan into services, planning and policy that relates to family and children.
- Advocate integrated approaches across the life continuum.
- Monitor family and children's action items in the Council Plan.
- Participate in family and children events to support the Council Plan, as requested. These may be consultation or advisory events that include representatives for portfolios including disability, children and family, youth and older persons.
- Consider matters referred by Children and Family Services and Council policies and strategies.
- Advocate community views on families and children.
- Provide advice on how best to inform community on family and children's issues.
- Provide strategic, expert and impartial advice to Council on policies, strategies and plans to advance children and family services.

## Outcomes

The outcomes we will work towards over the next 3 years will include:

- People feel welcomed and included - eliminating or reducing barriers to enable participation and full enjoyment of everything the city has to offer.
- People are safe- people of all ages and abilities feel physically and emotionally safe at home, at work and in the community. Children are safe from abuse and harm.
- People are healthy and well- ensuring that the right information, programs and facilities are available in the right places to support physical and mental health, good nutrition and access to green spaces.

- Children and families have access to quality early years programs- supporting people to be engaged in formal and informal learning throughout their lives so that they gain knowledge, opportunities, independence and confidence.
- People have opportunities to understand and acknowledge their Aboriginal history, heritage and identity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples contribute to the city's cultural, social and economic life.

## **Membership**

The Committee will include ten community representatives with personal and/or professional experience and expertise in family and children's issues. Under section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, a dedicated Aboriginal membership has been considered to support Aboriginal representation on the Committee. This special measure recognises the importance of Aboriginal representation to advise Council on the views and interests of Aboriginal people in the municipality. The inclusion of an Aboriginal member aligns with Council's Plan 2017-21 Goal: A city with an Aboriginal focus.

The City of Melbourne will seek members who are knowledgeable and prepared to engage in exploring issues and opportunities and provide advice to Council. It is preferable to have members who work or reside in a range of geographical areas across the City of Melbourne and represent the diverse demographics, skills and expertise within the municipality. City of Melbourne will seek members that are representative of the diversity of our community with reference to:

- disability
- age
- sexuality and gender identity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- cultural and linguistic background
- Socio-economic status.

## **Fields of knowledge**

Members of the Committee may have experiences in one or several of these fields:

- City of Melbourne (LGA) and Council
- State and Federal family and children's policy directions
- Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct
- Children's rights
- Integrated child and family services
- Community development and planning
- Engagement with children
- Planning or delivering services and infrastructure

- Family services
- Early education and lifelong learning
- Safety including family violence (in the home, workplace, in public spaces)
- Mobility, access and inclusion
- Health and Wellbeing
- Natural and urban environment
- Matters affecting culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups
- Matters affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) community
- Matters affecting Aboriginal community
- Matters affecting people with a disability

## **Terms of Membership**

- The appointment of community representatives will be made by the City of Melbourne, Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Chair, based upon responses to a formal Expression of Interest submission.
- Appointments will be staggered to ensure continuity.
- New members will be appointed for a period of up to two (2) years.
- Members may seek re-appointment for a further two (2) year term.
- The maximum term will be for a period of up to four years.
- A member who is absent from two consecutive meetings, without forwarding an apology, will be assumed to have resigned.
- Members wishing to resign their position on the Committee may do so at any time by providing written notice to the Chair of their intention to resign.
- Vacancies will be filled as soon as possible.
- All committee members must have a current working with children check during the term of membership.
- All members are expected to comply with the City of Melbourne Child Safe Commitment Statement, the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme and the organisation's Code of Conduct.

## **Appointment process**

Members will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Experience in child and family policy development, planning and program delivery.
- Demonstrated leadership in strategically positioning children and family services in line with government

reform and policy direction.

- Capacity to engage others in achieving shared goals and priorities for children and family development.
- Experience in measuring outcomes and impact.
- Specific areas of expertise to contribute to the Committee (as outlined above).

## **Method of nomination and appointment**

Nominations for appointment to FCAC will be advertised online and interviews of short listed applicants are conducted.

## **Committee structure**

Committee membership will comprise:

- Chair of Council's Future Melbourne Committee (People City portfolio) or another nominated Councillor (Chair)
- Director of Community Services
- Team Leader, Planning and Performance, Community Services
- Team Leader, Children's Services
- Team Leader, Family Services
- Senior Planning and Performance Officer (Secretariat)
- Ten community representatives, including dedicated Aboriginal representation.

## **Meetings of the Committee**

- Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis and members are expected to attend all meetings.
- Meetings will be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 5.30 pm – 6.30pm on a Monday night.
- Working groups and sub committees will be established as required.

## **Council support for committee members**

- The Committee will operate on a voluntary basis.
- Council will provide interpreters, carers, cab vouchers, car parking vouchers and any other requirements (as advised) to support members to attend and participate in meetings.
- Funding will be considered to support applications for sitting fees from members who are not representative of an organisation and are not employed.

## **Protocols**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The FCAC is an appointed advisory committee of Melbourne City Council and will be chaired by the Chair of Council's Future Melbourne Committee (People City portfolio) or another nominated Councillor.

#### **The role and responsibilities of the Chair**

- To support Committee members to fully engage in the issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner.
- To provide, where appropriate, feedback to Committee members on the outcomes of the advice they provide.
- To provide policy and secretariat support to the FCAC including coordination of meetings, agenda and minutes.
- To provide resources, including printed materials.
- To provide catering (light supper) for each meeting.
- To consider holding meetings in other locations across the municipality such as childcare and family services centres.

#### **The role and responsibilities of the Community members**

- To be fully prepared for meetings.
- To agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format.
- To bring local knowledge and broad community experience to the table.
- To consider and raise issues, proposals and ideas.
- To provide informed advice and guidance.

#### **Shared roles and responsibilities of all Committee members**

- All members can raise any issues and problems and have them dealt with in an honest, respectful and open manner.
- All members are given equal opportunity to participate in the Committee discussions.
- Working groups or sub committees may be established as required and members may nominate to be a part of these groups.

### **Code of Conduct and interest provisions**

In performing the role of a member, a committee member must:

- Adhere to City of Melbourne, Code of Conduct <sup>1</sup>
- Act honestly;
- Exercise reasonable care and diligence;
- Promote and uphold the rights of children;
- Not make improper use of their position; and
- Not make improper use of the information acquired because of their position.

Where a member of the committee has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter in which the committee is discussing, or is likely to be considered or discussed, the member must disclose the interest to the committee before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **Confidential and sensitive information**

- Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in Sections 77 and 89 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to FCAC will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.
- Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the advisory committee.
- Draft documents cannot be referred to or used in any grant applications, presentations or in the private or working roles of members.

## **Disclosure of personal details**

For transparency, members name, qualifications and current position will be listed on the City of Melbourne website.

## **Volunteer Forms**

Each person is required to register on City of Melbourne's volunteer management system, Better Impact, to cover insurance and related matters.

## **Review**

The Family and Children's Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/employee-code-of-conduct-2016.pdf>



## **Contact/Secretariat Support**

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