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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 11, 2024

A regular meeting of the Health & Social Services Committee was held on Thursday, January 11, 2024 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:31 AM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Dies assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Present: Councillor Dies, Vice-Chair
Councillor Anderson
Councillor Brenner
Councillor Carter left the meeting at 12:27 PM
Councillor Foster
Councillor Jubb
Regional Chair Henry*
*** denotes Councillors participating electronically**

Also

Present: Councillor Crawford attended a portion of the meeting
Councillor Pickles* attended a portion of the meeting
Councillor Schummer*
Councillor Woo* attended a portion of the meeting
Councillor Wotten*
*** denotes Councillors participating electronically**

Absent: Councillor Roy, Chair

Staff

Present: S. Austin, Director, Strategic Initiatives
E. Baxter-Trahair*, Chief Administrative Officer
C. Boyd, Solicitor, Chief Administrative Office – Legal Services
T. Cheseboro*, Chief, Region of Durham Paramedic Services, Health
S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services
S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
M. Dupont, Case Coordinator, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
J. Dixon, Director, Business Affairs and Finance Management, Social Services

- S. Foroutani, Area Manager, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - L. Fortuna, Director, Health Protection, Health
 - J. Gaskin, Director, Children's Services, Social Services
 - S. Hickman, Manager, Corporate Initiatives, Special Projects
 - R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
 - A. Johns, Case Coordinator, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - R.J. Kyle, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health
 - L. Larcombe, Supervisor, Employment Programs, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - M. Laschuk, Director, Family Services, Social Services
 - L. MacDermaid*, Director, Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors, Social Services
 - L. McIntosh, Director, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - P. McTavish, Associate Medical Officer of Health
 - M. Middleton, Supervisor, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - G. Muller, Director, Affordable Housing Development & Redevelopment
 - D. Nation-Williams, Area Manager, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - A. Robins, Director, Housing Services
 - J. Siciliano, Area Manager, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - A. Smith, Supervisor, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - C. Taylor, Manager, Budgets & Finance, Social Services
 - K. Thangaraj*, Director, Population Health and Chief Nursing Officer, Health
 - T. Tyner Cavanagh, Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships
 - E. Valant*, Area Manager, Income & Employment Support, Social Services
 - V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
- * **denotes staff participating electronically**

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Brenner, Seconded by Councillor Carter,
(1) That the minutes of the regular Health & Social Services Committee meeting held on Thursday, December 7, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Statutory Public Meetings

There were no statutory public meetings.

5. Presentations

5.1 Dr. Pepi McTavish, Associate Medical Officer of Health, re: Respirator Virus Illnesses Update

Dr. Pepi McTavish, Associate Medical Officer of Health, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Respirator Virus Illnesses Update.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Respiratory Virus Data Tracker – Current Summary
- COVID-19 & Influenza Cases
- Institutional Outbreaks
- COVID-19 Vaccination Administration
- COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage
- COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance
- Child Care & School Absenteeism
- Current COVID-19 & Influenza Vaccine Plans
- Current Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine Plans
- Current Recommendations

Dr. P. McTavish responded to questions from the Committee with regards to how knowledge gained during the pandemic has been applied to current influenza outbreaks; whether there are any known differences of wastewater monitoring of the Region compared to neighbouring municipalities, and how the Region's data compares to the data of neighbouring municipalities; whether the current number of reported positive COVID-19 infections includes positive lab tested results only and if rapid test results are also captured in the data; the accuracy of at home rapid test results; and whether the recommendation for vaccines is directed towards all individuals or primarily individuals identified as high risk.

5.2 Mackenzie Dupont, Case Coordinator, and Ashley Johns, Case Coordinator, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, re: Ontario Works: Trusteed Youth Program

Mackenzie Dupont, Case Coordinator, and Ashley Johns, Case Coordinator, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Ontario Works: Trusteed Youth Program.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- What is the Trusteed Youth (TY) Program
- Who is a Trusteed Youth (TY)?
- How does this benefit the youth?
- Ongoing Support for TY Clients
- Partnerships between TY Workers and Community Agencies

- Measures of Success
- Challenges
- Community Feedback
- Other Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division (IEHSD) Youth Focused Programming
 - LEAP Program
 - REACH

L. McIntosh, M. Dupont and A. Johns responded to questions from the Committee with regards to the geographic area in which youth are being serviced; whether the Ontario Works benefit covers the cost of appropriate housing and how the gap is filled in instances where the benefit does not cover the cost of housing; if youth in the program are able to be employed and receive benefits simultaneously, and whether there is a cap on income while receiving benefits; how the program is funded; if similar programs are being run in other regions; whether homelessness among youth is higher in Durham Region compared to other regions; whether youth are permitted to remain in the program after they turn 18 and what transition programs are available after age 18; whether transportation is made available to youth in the program; whether the program works directly with post-secondary schools; how youth are able to access the program and how partnering agencies assist in connecting youth to the program; the challenges leading to limited support in north Durham and how that is being addressed; how the program supports youth that wish to attain post-secondary education but do not have the financial means to do so; what assistance is provided to enable youth to access scholarships and grant opportunities; if the data of youth in the program shows any concerning trends regarding specific demographics; whether the majority of youth accessing the program are from marginalized communities; whether there is a connection with the Trusteed Youth Program and the Community Safety Wellbeing Committee; and what engagement the program has had with the lower tier municipalities of the Region and what role they can play in assisting the program.

At the request of Regional Chair Henry, staff was directed to provide this presentation at the January 31, 2024 Regional Council meeting.

5.3 Jocelyn Siciliano, Area Manager, Ashley Smith, Supervisor, and Meaghan Middleton, Supervisor, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, re: Durham Region Street Outreach

Jocelyn Siciliano, Area Manager, Ashley Smith, Supervisor, and Meaghan Middleton, Supervisor, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Durham Region Street Outreach.

J. Siciliano provided opening remarks stating that since the Durham Region Street Outreach Program officially began four (4) days prior, the Outreach Team has had 109 interactions with homeless individuals. J. Siciliano advised that 91%

of those individuals identified themselves as being unsheltered; 22% are 18-29 years of age; 70% are 30-49 years of age; and 38% of the 109 individuals are currently on the by-name list.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Unsheltered Homelessness in Durham Region
- Response
- Timeline
- Regional Street Outreach Program
- Regional Street Outreach Team
- Durham Region Transit (DRT) and Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division (IEHSD) Service Level Agreement
- Street Outreach Continuum
- Engagement Model
- Assertive Engagement
- Regional Street Outreach Services
- Primary Care Outreach & Mental Health Outreach Programs
- Regional Street Outreach Training
- Outreach Equipment
- Additional Community Street Outreach Programs
- Street Outreach Collaboration Initiatives
- Key Performance Indicators

J. Siciliano, A. Smith, and M. Middleton responded to questions from the Committee with regards to whether information regarding an individuals' place of origin could be collected along with gender and approximate age to assist with providing appropriate services to individuals; how the Region plans to achieve its objective of dedication to community wellness and building strong relationships with residents and businesses; the length of shifts for outreach workers; and what involvement Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS) may have as part of the program.

Councillor Carter questioned if the Outreach Team could attend the City of Oshawa's community wellness meetings once a month in order for the Team to provide additional insights. J. Siciliano advised that could be arranged.

5.4 Lisa McIntosh, Director, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, and Sue Ritchie Raymond, Consultant, Tim Welsh Consulting Inc., re: Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan

Lisa McIntosh, Director, Income, Employment and Homelessness Support Division, and Sue Ritchie Raymond, Consultant, Tim Welsh Consulting Inc., provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- The Role of the Region of Durham
- Need for Person-Centred Supports
- Strategic System Management – Homelessness
- Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan
- Attainable Housing Action Plan – Purpose and Scope
- Background Reports and Reviews
- Why Take a Systems Planning Approach?
- Common Housing System Models
- Homelessness in Durham Region
- The Current Homelessness Service System
- Actively Homeless Data
- Stakeholder Engagement
- What We Heard – Community Desired Outcomes
- Key System Needs
- Integrated Homelessness Action Plan – Strategic Priority Areas Identified
 - Goal 1: Implement System Integration Planning and Management
 - Goal 2: Improve System Capacity and Service Levels
 - Goal 3: Expand Social and Community Investment
 - Goal 4: Achieve System Excellence
 - Goal 5: Boost System Growth of Housing Supply
- Homelessness in Durham Region – Status Update
- Next Steps
 - Reporting
 - Investment Strategy

Discussion ensued with respect to the importance of modernization and expansion of the Region's current shelter system and the need for affordable housing options and corresponding challenges; the need for additional funding and support from the federal and provincial levels of government to address the homelessness crisis in the Region; the development of a strategy for public education and communication around homelessness and affordable housing and progress being made towards same; and the required support of lower tier municipalities as it relates to affordable housing solutions.

E. Baxter-Trahair stated that expanding affordable supportive shelter space across the Region is a priority and expressed the necessity of additional support from the federal and provincial governments to achieve same.

L. McIntosh and S. Danos-Papaconstantinou responded to questions from the Committee with regards to what the target number is for increasing affordable housing units in accordance with Goal 5 of the Integrated Homeless Action Plan;

when the Region's commitment ends; and when the Region will set its targets for the number of affordable units it aims to accomplish yearly.

L. McIntosh and E. Baxter-Trahair responded to questions from the Committee with regards to the reason the Region has established a 45-person limit on the shelter space at 1635 Dundas when there is a current homelessness crisis in the Region and the facility can accommodate over 100 people; and when the Region expects to determine the use of the remainder of the building.

6. Delegations

There were no delegations.

7. Health

7.1 Correspondence

There were no communications to consider.

7.2 Reports

There were no Health reports to consider.

8. Social Services

8.1 Correspondence

There were no communications to consider.

8.2 Reports

A) Approval to Accept One-Time Federal Funding for Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Provided by Infrastructure Canada (2024-SS-1)

Report #2024-SS-1 from S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services, was received.

S. Danos-Papaconstantinou responded to questions from the Committee with regards to how this funding will be allocated; and what affects this funding will have on the budget, if any.

Moved by Councillor Foster, Seconded by Councillor Anderson,

(2) That we recommend to Council:

- A) That approval be granted to accept one-time Federal funding from Infrastructure Canada in the amount of up to \$1,831,412 for the period of November 1, 2023, to April 30, 2024, to be expended in accordance with the Reaching Home guidelines; and

- B) That the Commissioner of Social Services be authorized to enter into all necessary agreements related to the Reaching Home program in a form satisfactory to the Commissioner of Finance.

CARRIED

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

10. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

11. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Health & Social Services Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 9:30 AM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

13. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Jubb, Seconded by Councillor Foster,
(3) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

J. Dies, Vice-Chair

V. Walker, Committee Clerk