



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Committee of the Whole

From: Linda Mitchelson, Manager of Social Services Division

Meeting Date: September 25, 2017

Subject: Report CSSS17-007
Ontario Early Years System and Child and Family Centres
Transformation Plan Update

Purpose

A report to provide an update to Council on the transformation of the Early Years and Child Care system and to recommend approval of the recommendations related to the planning and management of the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC) in the City and County of Peterborough.

Recommendation

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report CSSS17-007 dated September 25, 2017 of the Manager of Social Services, as follows:

That the recommendations related to the planning and management of the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC) in the City and County of Peterborough, as outlined in Appendix A, be adopted and used to guide negotiations for service agreements.

Budget and Financial Implications

There is no new funding requirement from the City or County as a result of this report. All costs related to the management of the OEYCFC's will be fully covered by existing and new 100% provincial funding provided to support the City with this new responsibility. The 2018 Social Services budget will be revised accordingly.

The 10% Allowable Administration fee, in the amount of 123,666 will be allocated to staff salaries and benefits, planning and contractual services.

The proposed period of the service contract coincides with the budget allocation cycle of the Ministry of Education for these services. Funding is anticipated to continue at a similar level in future years.

Background

Conflict of Pecuniary Interest

The Director of Community Services has declared a Conflict of Pecuniary Interest relating to this report since his spouse works for the Peterborough Family Resource Centre, one of the Service Providers referenced in this report. He will refrain from any direct involvement in the approval, negotiations, or implementation of this report.

Child Care Transformation

Since 2010, the Ministry of Education (EDU) has been transforming and modernizing the Early Years and Child Care sector into a more seamless and integrated system to support young children and their families in Ontario. Over the last 7 years the province has:

- Implemented full day kindergarten for all of Ontario's 4 & 5 year old children.
- Invested \$203 million to create space for new child care and child and family support programs in schools; to retrofit existing child care space within schools to provide more spaces for children 0 – 3.8 years of age; and to stabilize the child care system.
- Replaced the Day Nurseries Act with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 a new legislative framework to support a more responsive, high-quality and accessible child care and early year's system.
- Invested \$269 million to support the implementation of a wage enhancement in the licensed child care sector beginning in 2015.
- Invested \$70 million to expand culturally relevant child care spaces and expand access to child and family programs for Indigenous children and families living off reserve.

- Announced plans to help 100,000 more children, from birth to age 4, access licensed child care over the next five years, beginning in 2017. This major transformation will double capacity for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, and will help more families find high-quality licensed child care spaces to give their children the best possible start in life. This plan also supports new child care fee subsidies and expanded access to affordable licensed child care for children.

Provincial investments made between 2010 and 2016 supported the creation of approximately 190 new licensed spaces for children 0 – 4 years through program transformation efforts. As well, an additional 840 before and after school spaces for children 4 – 12 years were created in elementary schools in the City and County. These new before and after school spaces are a result of the implementation of full day kindergarten initiated in 2010. New Wage Enhancement investments have provided increased wages for 248 FTE Early Childhood Educators and 47 licensed home child care providers.

The new funding announced for system expansion in 2017 will be used to:

- provide fee subsidy for 50 new children currently on the fee subsidy wait list;
- support the creation of 97 new child care spaces (26 in the City and 71 in the County for children 0 – 4 years; and
- provide increased affordability for 15 children through the reduction of parent fees in a rural program.

Transformation of Child and Family Programs - Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs)

In 2016, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to transform the existing EDU funded child and family programs into an integrated system of services and supports for children ages 0-6 and their parents and caregivers. In the City and County of Peterborough these services are currently provided by:

1. Peterborough Family Resource Centre(PFRC) in the City of Peterborough, Asphodel-Norwood and Selwyn;
2. Old Millbrook School Family Centre (OMSFC) in Cavan-Monaghan; and
3. North Hastings Children's Services (NHCS) in North Kawartha.

Beginning January 2018 all funding and planning responsibilities for the new OEYCFCs will be managed locally by the municipality as part of the existing responsibility for the service system management of child care.

The key goals and objectives for the new child and family centres are:

- Parents and caregivers have access to high quality services that support them in their role as their children's first teachers, enhance their well-being, and enrich their knowledge about early learning and development.
- Children have access to play and inquiry-based learning opportunities and experience positive developmental health and well-being.
- Parents and caregivers have opportunities to strengthen their relationships with their children.
- Francophone children and families have access to French language programs and gain enhanced knowledge about language and identity acquisition.
- Indigenous children and families have access to culturally responsive programming.
- Parents and caregivers are provided with timely, relevant and up to date information about community and specialized services.
- Local service providers collaborate and integrate services to meet community needs in an efficient and accessible way.

To achieve the intended goals and outcomes EDU has identified the following mandatory core services that must be available to children and families:

- Engaging parents and caregivers;
- Supporting early learning and development; and
- Making connections for families.

Municipalities are also required to ensure:

- physical program sites where children, parents and caregivers can participate in child and family programs and services in-person are available;
- centre-based core services are offered year round and at least five days per week, including either Saturday or Sunday;
- qualified staff teams are responsible for delivering programs and services at every centre. Qualified teams must include at least one Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) to deliver mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development.
- appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure that Child and Family Centres are delivered in ways that promote the health, safety and well-being of children and families being served.

As the service system manager, municipalities have the choice to directly operate Child and Family Centres or enter into a purchase of service agreement with publicly-funded school boards and/or non-profit local service providers.

Funding

To assist with the initial planning process the ministry provided a small amount of funding in 2017 to support data analysis and early years planning. In July, the ministry confirmed the City of Peterborough's 2018 funding allocation for the management of the child and family programs beginning in 2018. The 2018 funding for the purposes of data analysis and planning is included in the total child and family centre allocation. The chart below outlines the municipality's 2017/18 allocation for planning and OEYCFC programs:

Child and Family Program Allocation	2017	2018
OEYCFC Programs	N/A	1,009,438
10 % Allowable Administration	N/A	123,666
Data Analysis Services	73,153	73,153
Early Child Development Planning – Regular	23,800	23,800
Early Child Development Planning - Indigenous	6,600	6,600
Total Funding	103,553	1,236,657

In the 2016/2017 fiscal year, the child and family programs in the City and County received a total of \$704,806 for the provision of early years services.

Initial Planning for the Child and Family Programs

In order to inform initial planning and to achieve the intended outcomes of the transformation and transfer of the OEYCFC to the municipality, staff hired a consultant to conduct an in-depth study of community needs as they relate to the child and family programs. The purpose of the community needs assessment was to:

- Identify evolving community needs, service gaps, and service duplication;
- Consider ways to enhance service accessibility for all children and families, especially isolated, newcomer, and low-income families;
- Ensure the active engagement of Indigenous and Francophone partners in the planning, management and delivery of responsive programs and services;
- Solicit advice and support local decision-making to enrich programs, facilitate smooth transitions and enhance integration between early years services, schools and specialized community services; and
- Collect insights from parents, caregivers and children to inform local programs and services.

To ensure that planning decisions are informed by a wide range of early years sector partners, staff developed an engagement strategy that included broad representation of local community partners. Representatives from the following organizations were invited to participate in the community planning processes:

- Public, Separate and French district school boards, including Directors of Education and Early Years Leads;
- Peterborough Public Health;
- Specialized community service agencies;
- Current OEYC service providers;
- First Nations and Indigenous partners;
- Licensed child care providers; and
- Fleming College and Trent University

The Needs Assessment considered information related to:

1. Location, number and language of families with children ages 0 – 6;
2. Existing child and family programs serving children ages 0-6, parents and caregivers including information on program offerings, locations and utilization;
3. Children and/or families with identified social or developmental vulnerabilities and their approximate location;
4. Number and location of children and/or families that self-identify as Indigenous;
5. Available or potential program space within local schools or community building
6. Parent and caregiver feedback on preferred OEYCFC service locations, hours of operation and program offerings; and

Needs Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement

A comprehensive needs assessment revealed a well-functioning and robust early years system exists in our community, characterized by very high levels of praise for PFRC and the Old Millbrook School Family Centre and strong satisfaction for the programs and services they offered. A broad stakeholder consultation that involved over 500 participants brought to light some opportunities to enhance the present system. The report identified opportunities to improve a very good system to make it even better. Some of the concerns that were raised are perhaps a reflection of changing needs and changing demographics which came to light in the review of the 2016 census data, changes in population and relatively new Early Development Instrument (EDI - 2015) data from the school boards that point to areas of the City and County where more vulnerable children (as defined by the EDI) are currently living. Further details about the findings of the needs assessment can be found in Appendix 1 and the recommendations by theme are contained in Appendix 2.

The report also identified areas of the City and County that appear to be underserved. The consultant recommends an examination of potential new OEYCFC sites in the north and south west areas of the city. Some of these potential locations align well with vulnerable school neighborhoods and potential space availabilities, as identified by local school boards. The changing populations and child vulnerabilities were also identified in the County where there is a renewed call for hubs, while continuing to explore the need for mobile rural sites. The consultant recommends maintaining existing OEYC sites in Lakefield, Norwood and Millbrook, but calls for a re-examination of the OEYC in Apsley and a potential new site in Otonabee-South Monaghan.

While generally satisfied with the current programs and services, families expressed desire to receive more services in general. Of particular concern, families requested that the new OEYCFC's provide:

- more parent and child drop-in programs throughout the week and longer hours of service for these programs;
- Programming during the summer months, March Break and after-school; and
- More parent education and parenting workshops.

Additional areas identified by the consultant that require further review are focused on:

- the amount of toddler and infant hours of programming offered by PFRC. While the consultant noted that there are no best practice guidelines for what that ratio should be, offering four times as many infant hours as toddler hours appears to create an imbalance, even though early engagement strategies with families is considered to be very beneficial;
- the ratio of drop-in hours to universal program hours to targeted program hours. The Needs Assessment gathered information on two neighboring communities (Northumberland and the City of Kawartha Lakes) and found programming and drop-in hours to be much higher in these communities than in Peterborough and the ratios were also quite different, It has been recommended that the City of Peterborough and its new OEYCFC providers explore this issue more thoroughly;
- enhanced communication efforts and partnership possibilities. Evidence from the survey, focus groups and key informant interviews indicated that current OEYC providers are good in these areas, but there was still a call for better and more effective communication, particularly with program participants and potential participants, and for more partnership opportunities with schools, child care centres and other service providers in the early years system, including Indigenous, Francophone and Newcomer stakeholders.

In total, the consultant made 29 recommendations for consideration as part of the planning for the new OEYCFCs as outlined in Appendix B. Staff has reviewed the recommendations and grouped and ranked each recommendation based on the ministry priorities, analysis of relevant data and stakeholder feedback, as outlined in Appendix A. These recommendations and the ranking provided the basis for the development of the initial plan.

Initial Plan Required by Ministry of Education

2018 is considered a transition year and initial plans for the OEYCFCs are to be submitted by the City as Service Manager to the Ministry by September 29, 2017. Submissions are to include a summary of the needs assessment, and a description of how programs and services will be delivered beginning January 2018 and how the system may be shifted over the course of the year. Service agreements and local funding approaches between the municipality and the organizations delivering the child and family programs must be in place for January 1, 2018.

Procurement

In compliance with the City Purchasing By-law 14-127, Section 9.2, this will be considered both a transfer of funds and fulfillment of legislated requirements and will not require a Bid Solicitation. This is elaborated in Section 9.2.3 f. which specifically identifies “Social Service agencies that provide service to the City through Service Agreements such as Daycare and Hostel Operators.” Further, in accordance with Section 9.1.2 h) the Director of Corporate Services has approved that the services “may be obtained through a non-competitive bidding process ... when the good or service is available only through a sole or single source.”

Based on the findings of the needs assessment, the recommendations made by the consultant, the funding available and the ministry guidelines, staff will negotiate service agreements to be effective January 1, 2018. The negotiations will address the following components:

1. The City sole source with the Peterborough Family Resource Centre and the Old Millbrook School Family Centre for the provision of OEYCFC services in the City and County of Peterborough.

2. The PFRC provide the suite of mandatory core OEYCFC services at the following locations:

City of Peterborough	County of Peterborough (Townships)
Antrim St. Family Hub	Lakefield Family Hub (Selwyn)
Otonabee Valley Family Hub	Norwood Family Hub (Asphodel-Norwood)
St. John Family Hub	

3. The OMSFC provide the suite of mandatory core OEYCFC services in the township of Cavan-Monaghan at the Old Millbrook School in Millbrook.
4. The municipality will further examine the needs of families living in Apsley in order to determine the need for OEYCFC programs and services in this community and determine if it should also be included in the service agreement with PFRC or OMSFC.

In addition to providing the mandatory core services in the above noted locations, the terms of the service agreements will include the requirement for providers to:

5. Ensure that hub-based core services in the City and County of Peterborough, are offered year round and at least five days per week, including either Saturday or Sunday and including March Break and PA Days.
6. Ensure that parent/child drop-in programs are offered a minimum of two times per week in each hub location and operate at different times and on different days of the week to allow for maximum access for families.
7. Develop and submit to the municipality an implementation plan describing how the core services related to: 1) engaging parents and caregivers, 2) supporting early learning and development, and 3) making connections to other family services will be provided. The plan will also include a detailed 2018 operating budget, staffing details (including staff qualifications) and the projected timelines to implement and deliver the required programs and services in 2018.

This report was presented to the Joint Service Steering Committee on September 21, 2017 as Report Number CSSSJSSC17-007 and the recommendation was endorsed. A copy of Sandra Robinson's background presentation is enclosed as Appendix C.

Summary

The transformation of the OEYCFC's is certainly an exciting time for families in our community as it provides an opportunity to enhance existing child and family services that align with identified community needs and priorities. As identified in the Needs Assessment, young children and their families in the City and County have a variety of child and family programs and services available to them. However, there is also strong evidence that supports the need to enhance existing services and consider new hub locations. Increases in provincial funding allows for the opportunity to provide these additional needed services.

The Old Millbrook School Family Centre and the Peterborough Family Resource Centre have demonstrated their long-standing commitment and ability to deliver high quality early years programs; collaborate with community partners; and have the knowledge and expertise to address the diverse needs of the families they serve and are positioned well to be the service providers for the new OEYCFCs in the City and County of Peterborough. The report recommends the next steps to be followed to develop service agreements with these providers effective January 1, 2018.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:

Appendix A – OEYCFC Recommendations by Theme
Appendix B – OEYCFC Needs Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Report
Appendix C – Presentation: "Transformation of the Child Care and Early Years System Update"